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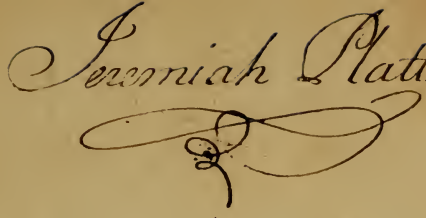
Jeremiah Platt

A

DRAUGHT

OF THE

FORM

OF THE

GOVERNMENT AND DISCIPLINE

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Propoſed, by the Synod of NEW-YORK and PHILADELPHIA, for the conſideration of the Preſbyteries and Churches under their care.

NEW-YORK:

Printed by S. and J. LOUDON, No. 5, *Water-Street.*

M,DCC,LXXXVII.

JAN 19 1939

THE Synod of New-York and Philadelphia, *at their meeting, held in Philadelphia*, May, 1787, *appointed the Rev.* Dr. John Rodgers, Dr. Alexander MacWhorter, Mr. Alexander Miller and Mr. James Wilson, *Miniſters, a Committee, to print One Thouſand Copies of the draught of the Form of Government and Diſcipline, as now amended by the Synod, to be diſtributed among the Preſbyteries and Churches under their care.*

The Committee was alſo appointed to print the laſt paragraph of the 20th Chapter of the Weſtminſter Confeſſion of Faith; the 3d paragraph of the 23d Chapter; and the 1ſt paragraph of the 31ſt Chapter, as now propoſed to be altered by the Synod:——*Further, the Committee was appointed, to reviſe the Directory for the Public worſhip of God, and to print it, when reviſed and amended by them, together with the draught of the form of Government and Diſcipline: And the Synod agreed, that theſe be called,* when reviſed and adopted, the Confeſſion of Faith, and Directory for the Public Worſhip of God, of the Preſbyterian Church in the United States of America.

The Committee, conſidering that a power of making verbal alterations, in the draught of the Form of Government and Diſcipline, was committed to them by the Synod, and being fully ſenſible that they are liable to make miſtakes in this particular, have thought proper to print, all the words which they have changed, in Italics.——

INTRODUCTION.

THE Synod of NEW-YORK and PHILADELPHIA, *judging it expedient to aſcertain and fix the* ſyſtem of union, and the form of *the Government and* Diſcipline *of the Preſbyterian Church in theſe United States*, under their care, *have* thought proper to lay down, *by way of introduction*, a few *of ths* general principles, by which they have been *hitherto* governed, and *which are the ground work* of the *following* plan. This, *it is* hoped, will, in ſome *meaſure*, prevent *thoſe* raſh *miſconſtructions* and uncandid reflections, *which uſually* proceed from an imperfect view of any ſubject; as well as make the ſeveral parts *of the ſyſtem plain, and* the whole *plan perſpicuous, and fully* underſtood.

The Synod are unanimouſly of opinion;

I. That "God alone is Lord of the conſcience, and hath left it free from the doc-"trines and commandments of men; which are "in any thing contrary to his word, or beſide "it in matters of faith or worſhip:" Therefore, they conſider the rights of private judgement, in all matters that *reſpect* religion, as univerſal and unalienable: They do not even wiſh to ſee any religious conſtitution aided by the civil power, further than may be neceſſary for protection and ſecurity, and, at the ſame time, may be equal and common to all others.

II. That, in perfect conſiſtency with the above principle of common right, every Chriſtian Church,

Church, or union and association of particular Churches, *are* entitled to declare the terms of admission into *their communion*, and the qualifications of *their* ministers and members, as well as the whole system of *the* internal government which Christ hath appointed: That, in the exercise of this right, they may, notwithstanding, err, in making the terms of communion *either* too lax or too narrow: yet, even in this case, they do not infringe the liberty, or *encroach upon the* rights of others, but only make an improper use of their own.

III. That our blessed Saviour, for the edification of *the* visible Church, which is his body, hath appointed officers, not only to preach the Gospel *and administer the Sacraments*; but also to exercise discipline, for the preservation both of truth and duty: and, that it is incumbent upon *these officers*, and upon the whole Church, in whose name they act, to censure, or cast out, the erroneous and scandalous; *observing*, in *all* cases, the rules *contained* in the word of God.

IV. That truth is in order to goodness; and that no opinion can be either more pernicious or more absurd, than that which brings truth and falsehood upon a level, and represents it of no consequence what a man's *sentiments* are: On the contrary, They are of opinion, that soundness in the faith lays a proper foundation for holy practice; for, if it were otherwise, it would be of no *importance* either to discover truth or to embrace it.

V. That while, under the conviction of the above principle, They think it necessary to make effectual provision, that all, who are admitted

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as Teachers, be found in the faith; They alſo believe, that there are truths and forms, with reſpect to which men of good characters and principles may differ: And, in all theſe, They think it the duty, both of private Chriſtians and Societies, to *exerciſe* mutual forbearance towards each other.

VI. That though the character, qualifications, and authority of Church-officers, are laid down in the *holy* Scriptures, as well as the proper method of *their* inveſtiture and inſtitution; yet the election of the perſons, to the exerciſe of this authority, in any particular ſociety, is in that ſociety.

VII. That all Church power, whether exerciſed by the body in general, or, in the way of repreſentation, by delegated authority, is only miniſterial and declarative: *That is to ſay*, that the Holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith and manners; that no Church judicatory ought to pretend to make laws, to bind the conſcience, in virtue of their own authority; *and* that *all* their *deciſions ſhould* be founded upon the revealed will of God: *Now* though it *will* eaſily be admitted, that all Synods and Councils may err, through the frailty inſeparable from humanity; yet there is much greater danger, from the uſurped claim of making laws, than from the right of judging upon laws already made, and common to all who profeſs the Goſpel; although this right, as neceſſity requires in the preſent ſtate, be lodged with fallible men.

VIII. *Laſtly*, That, if the above Scriptural and rational principles be ſtedfaſtly adhered to, the vigour and ſtrictneſs of *their* diſcipline will contribute to the glory and happineſs of any Church

Church. Since *discipline* must be purely moral and spiritual in its object, and not attended with any civil effects, it can derive no force whatever, but from its' own justice, the approbation of an impartial public, and the countenance and blessing of the great Head of the Church universal.

The F O R M, *&c.*

Of the Church.

JESUS CHRIST, who is now exalted, far above all principality and power, hath erected, in this world, a kingdom, which is his Church.

The universal Church consists of all those persons, in every nation, together with their children, who make profession of *the* holy religion *of Christ*, and submit to his laws.

As this immense multitude cannot meet *together*, in one place, to hold communion, or *to* worship God, it is reasonable, and *warranted by Scripture example*, that they should be divided into many particular Churches.

A particular Church consists of a number of professing Christians, with their offspring, voluntarily associated together, for divine worship and *godly* living, *agreeably* to the holy Scriptures; and *submitting to* a certain form of government.

Of the Officers of the Church.

Extraordinary Officers.

Our blessed Lord, at first, collected his Church, out of different nations, and formed it into one body, by the mission of men endued with miraculous gifts, which have, long since, ceased. The

Perpetual Officers. The ordinary and perpetual Officers, in the Church, are, *Biſhops* or *Paſtors*; the repreſentatives of the People, uſually ſtiled *Ruling Elders*; and *Deacons*.

Of Biſhops or Paſtors.

Names, &c. The *paſtoral* office is the firſt, in the Church, both *for* dignity and uſefulneſs. *The perſon who fills this office*, hath, in Scripture, obtained different names expreſſive of *his* various duties: As *He* has the overſight of the flock of Chriſt, he is *called* Biſhop *: As He feeds them with ſpiritual food, he is *ſtiled* Paſtor: As He ſerves Chriſt in his church, he is termed Miniſter: As *it* is *his duty* to be grave, and prudent, and an example of the flock, and to govern well in the houſe and kingdom of Chriſt, he is *denominated* Preſbyter or Elder: As He is the meſſenger of God, he *is addreſſed as the* Angel *of the Church*: As He is ſent to declare the will of God *to* ſinners, and to beſeech *them* to be reconciled to God through Chriſt, he is *repreſented as* Ambaſſador: And, as He diſpenſes the manifold grace of God, and the ordinances *inſtituted by* Chriſt, he is *ſpoken of as* Steward of the myſteries of God.

Of Ruling Elders.

Name, &c. Ruling Elders are properly the repreſentatives of the people, choſen by them, for the purpoſe of exerciſing government and diſcipline,

* As the office and character of the Goſpel Miniſter is particularly and fully deſcribed, in the holy Scriptures, under the title of Biſhop; and as this term is peculiarly expreſſive of his duty, as an Overſeer of the flock, it ought not to be rejected.

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in conjunction with Paſtors *or Miniſters*. This office has been underſtood, by a great part of the Proteſtant reformed Churches, to be deſignated, in the Holy Scriptures, by the title of Governments; and of thoſe who rule well, but do not labour in word and doctrine.

Of Deacons.

Name, &c. The Scriptures clearly point out Deacons as diſtinct officers in the Church, whoſe buſineſs it is, not to adminiſter any of the ordinances of the Goſpel, but to take care of the Poor, and to diſtribute among them the collections which may be raiſed for their uſe. To them alſo may be properly committed the management of the temporal affairs of the Church.

Of the Ordinances in a particular Church.

Ordinances of the Church. The Ordinances, eſtabliſhed by Chriſt the Head, in a particular Church, *which is* regularly conſtituted with its proper officers, are, Prayer; ſinging Praiſes; reading, expounding, and preaching the Word of God; adminiſtring Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper; public ſolemn Faſting and Thankſgiving; Catechiſing; making collections for the Poor and other pious purpoſes; exerciſing Diſcipline; and bleſſing the People.

Of Church Government, and the ſeveral kinds of Judicatories.

Different Judicatories. *It is abſolutely neceſſary that* the government of the Church be exerciſed under ſome certain and definite form: And we hold it expedient, and agreeable to ſcripture and

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the practice of the primitive Christians, that the Church be governed by Congregational, Presbyterial, and Synodical Assemblies. *In full consistency with this belief*, we embrace, in the spirit of charity, those Christians who differ from us, in opinion or in practice, on these subjects.

Their Powers. These Assemblies ought not to possess any civil jurisdiction, nor to inflict any civil penalties. Their power is wholly moral or spiritual, and that only ministerial and declarative. They possess the right of requiring obedience to the laws of Christ; and of excluding the disobedient and disorderly from the privileges of the Church. To give efficiency, however, to this necessary and scriptural authority, they possess the powers requisite for obtaining evidence and inflicting censure: They can call before them any offender against the order and government of the Church: They can require members, of their own society, to appear and give testimony on the cause; but the highest punishment, to which their authority extends, is to exclude, the contumacious and impenitent, from the Congregation of believers.

Of the Congregational Assembly or Judicatory, usually stiled the Church Session.

Constituent Members of the Church Session. The Church Session consists of the *Minister* or *Ministers*, and Elders of a particular Congregation.

Its power. *The Church Session* is competent to the spiritual government of the congregation: For which purpose, they have power to inquire into the knowledge and Christian conduct

duct of *all its* members ; to call before them offenders and witneſſes, *who are of* their own *denomination* ; to admoniſh ; to rebuke ; to ſuſpend or exclude, from the Sacraments, thoſe who are found to deſerve the cenſures of the Church ; to concert the beſt meaſures for promoting the ſpiritual intereſts of *the* Congregation ; and to appoint Delegates to the higher Judicatories of the Church.

How to be convened. The Miniſter ſhall have a right to convene the Seſſion when he may judge it requiſite : And he ought, in all caſes, to convene them, when requeſted by any two or more of the Elders.

Regiſters to be kept. We think it proper, that every *Church* Seſſion keep a fair regiſter, of Births ; *of* Baptiſms ; *of* Marriages ; of perſons admitted to the Lord's table ; of Deaths in the ſociety ; and *of* other removals.

Of the Preſbyterial Aſſembly.

Neceſſity of the Preſbytery. The Church being divided into many ſeparate Congregations, *theſe* need mutual counſel and aſſiſtance, in order to preſerve ſoundneſs of doctrine, and regularity of diſcipline ; and to enter into common meaſures, for the promoting of knowledge and religion, and for *the* preventing *of* the encroachments of infidelity and error. Hence ariſe the importance and uſefulneſs of Preſbyterial and Synodical Aſſemblies.

Conſtituent Members thereof. A Preſbytery conſiſts of all the *Miniſters*, and one ruling Elder from each Congregation, within a certain diſtrict. Every Congregation, which has a ſettled Paſtor,

tor, has a right to be represented, in Presbytery, by one Elder; and every Collegiate Church, by two or more Elders, in proportion to its Ministers. Where there are two or more Congregations, united under one Pastor, all such Congregations shall have but one Elder to represent them. Every Congregation, which has no settled *Minister*, and is able and willing, in the judgment of Presbytery, to support *one*, shall be entitled to be represented, by a ruling Elder, in this *Judicatory* : and where there are two or more such Congregations, united for the maintenance of the Gospel, and, in their united state, are of the description aforesaid, then such united Congregations may be represented by one Elder. Every Elder, not known to the Presbytery, shall produce a certificate of his regular appointment, from *the* Church which he represents.

Quorum of the Presbytery. Any three Ministers, and as many Elders as may be present, belonging to *the* Presbytery, being met, at the time and place appointed, shall be a Judicatory, competent to the dispatch of business ; notwithstanding the absence of the other Members.

Powers of the Presbytery. &c. The Presbytery *have* cognizance of all things, that regard the welfare of the particular Churches within their bounds, *which* are not cognizable by the Session : *They* have also a power of receiving and issuing appeals from the Sessions ; and references, brought before them in an orderly manner ; of examining, and licensing Candidates for the Gospel ministry ; of ordaining, settling, removing, or judging Ministers ; of examining, and approving or censuring the records of the Sessions ;

Seſſions; of reſolving queſtions of doctrine or diſcipline, ſeriouſly and reaſonably propoſed; of condemning erroneous opinions, that injure the purity or peace of the Church; of viſiting particular churches, to inquire into their ſtate, and redreſs the evils that may have ariſen within them; of uniting, or dividing Congregations, at the requeſt of the people; and of ordering whatever pertains to the ſpiritual concerns of the Churches under their care: and it ſhall be the duty of the Preſbyteries to report, to the Synod, licenſures, ordinations, *the* diſmiſſing or receiving of Members, and the removal of Members by death.

How to be convened. *The Preſbytery* ſhall meet on their own adjournments; and, when any emergency ſhall require a meeting, ſooner than the time to which the Judicatory ſtands adjourned, the Moderator ſhall, with the concurrence, or at the requeſt, of two Miniſters and two Elders, the Elders being of different Congregations, call a meeting of the Preſbytery, by a circular letter ſent to every Miniſter, and to the Seſſion of every vacant Congregation having a right to ſend a Repreſentative to the Judicatory, in due time previous to the meeting, which time ſhall be aſcertained and recorded by each Preſbytery, and ſhall not be leſs than ten days: and nothing ſhall be tranſacted, at ſuch ſpecial meeting, beſides *the* particular buſineſs for which the Judicatory has been thus convened.

Opening of the Preſbytery. At each meeting of Preſbytery, a ſermon ſhall be delivered, if convenient; and every particular ſeſſion ſhall be opened and concluded with prayer: The roll ſhall be called, and the meeting recorded by the Clerk, who

who ſhall enter the names of the Members preſent, and alſo of thoſe Miniſters who are abſent.

Of the Synodical Aſſembly.

Conſtituent Members of Synod.

As a Preſbytery is the Convention of the Biſhops and Elders, within a certain diſtrict; ſo a Synod is the Convention of ſeveral Preſbyteries, within a larger diſtrict.

Powers thereof.

The Synod have power to admit and judge of appeals, regularly brought up from the Preſbyteries; to give their judgment on all references, in eccleſiaſtical caſes, made to them; to review the Preſbytery books; to redreſs whatever hath been done by Preſbyteries contrary to order; to take effectual care that Preſbyteries obſerve the Conſtitutions of the Church; to make ſuch regulations, for the benefit of their whole body, and of the Preſbyteries and Churches under their care, as ſhall be agreeable to the word of God, and not contradictory to the deciſions of the General Council; and to propoſe, to the General Council, for their adoption, ſuch meaſures as may be of common advantage to the whole Church.

Of the General Council.

Stile of the higheſt Judicatory of the Preſbyterian Church.

The General Council *is* the higheſt Judicatory of the Preſbyterian Church; and ſhall repreſent, in one body, all the particular Churches of *this* denomination; and ſhall bear the ſtile and title of THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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Constituent Members of the General Council. The General Council shall consist of an equal delegation of *Bishops* and Elders, from each Presbytery, in the following proportion: *viz.* each Presbytery, consisting of not more than six Ministers, shall send one Minister and one Elder; each Presbytery, consisting of more than six Ministers and not more than twelve, shall send two Ministers and two Elders; and in like proportion, for every six Ministers, in any Presbytery: And these Delegates, so appointed, shall bear the title of COMMISSIONERS TO THE GENERAL COUNCIL.

Quorum thereof. Any fourteen, or more, of these Commissioners, one half of whom shall be Ministers, being met, on the day, and at the place appointed, shall be competent to form a General Council, *and to proceed to business.*

Powers of the Council. The Council shall receive and issue all appeals and references, which may be regularly brought before them from the inferior Judicatories; *they* shall review the minutes and proceedings of every Synod, to approve or censure them; *they shall* give their advice and instructions, in all other cases submitted to them; *and they shall* also constitute the bond of union, peace, correspondence, and mutual confidence, among all our Churches.

Other powers of the Council. To the Council also belongs *the* power of consulting, reasoning, and judging, in controversies respecting doctrine and discipline; of reproving, warning, or bearing testimony against error in doctrine, or immorality *in* practice, in any Church, Presbytery, or Synod; of corresponding with foreign Churches; of putting a stop to schismatical contentions *and* disputations:

disputations: and, in general, of recommending and attempting reformation of manners; and *of* promoting charity, truth, and holiness, through all the Churches: and of erecting new Synods, when they judge it necessary.

Restriction of the power of the Council.

Before any overtures or regulations, proposed by the Council *to be established as* standing rules, *shall be obligatory on the Churches*, it shall be necessary to transmit them to all the Presbyteries, and to receive the returns of, at least, a majority of the Presbyteries, in writing, approving thereof.

Of Electing and Ordaining Ruling Elders and Deacons.

Having defined the Officers of the Church, and the Assemblies by which it shall be governed, it is proper here to prescribe the modes in which ecclesiastical Rulers shall be ordained to their respective offices.

Mode of electing Ruling Elders, &c.

Every Congregation shall elect persons, to *the* office *of Ruling Elder, and to the office of Deacon*, or either of them, in the mode most approved and in use in that Congregation.

How to be ordained.

When any person *shall have* been elected to *either of* these offices, *and shall have declared his willingness to accept thereof*, he shall be set apart in the following manner.

Engagements required of Elders and Deacons.

After sermon, the Minister shall *propose* to him, in the presence of the Congregation, the following questions: *viz.*

I.

I. Do you believe the Scriptures, of the Old and New Teſtament, to be the word of God, the only infallible rule of Faith and Practice ?

II. Do you ſincerely receive and adopt, the Confeſſion of Faith of this Church, as containing *the* Syſtem of doctrine taught in the holy Scriptures ?

III. Do you approve of the Government and Diſcipline of the Preſbyterian Church, as exerciſed in theſe United States ?

IV. Do you accept the office of Ruling Elder [or Deacon as the caſe may be] in this Congregation, and promiſe faithfully to perform all the duties thereof ?

To be ſet apart by prayer.

After *having anſwered theſe queſtions in the affirmative*, he ſhall be ſet apart, by prayer, *to the office of Elder* [*or Deacon as the caſe may be* ;] *and the Miniſter ſhall give him, and the Congregation, an exhortation ſuited to the occaſion.*

Of Licenſing Candidates, or Probationers, to preach the Goſpel.

Preſbyteries ought to licenſe Probationers.

The holy Scriptures require, that ſome trial be previouſly had, of thoſe who are to be ordained to the miniſtry of the Goſpel, that this ſacred office may not be degraded, by being committed to weak and unworthy men ; and that the Churches may have an opportunity of judging of the competency of the talents of thoſe by whom they are to be inſtructed and governed. For this purpoſe *Preſbyteries* ſhall licenſe Probationers, to preach the Goſpel ; that, after a competent trial of their

talents, and receiving, from the Churches, a good report; They may, in due time, ordain *them* to the paſtoral office.

Teſtimonials to be produced by Candidates applying to be licenſed.

It is proper and requiſite, that Candidates, applying to the Preſbytery to be licenſed to preach the Goſpel, produce ſatisfactory teſtimonials of their good moral character, and of their being regular members of ſome particular Church: And it is the duty of the Preſbytery, for their further ſatisfaction with regard to the real piety of ſuch Candidates, to examine them reſpecting their experimental acquaintance with religion, and the motives which influence them to deſire the ſacred office. And it is recommended, that the Candidate be *alſo* required to produce a diploma, of Bachelor or Maſter of Arts, from ſome College or Univerſity; or at leaſt authentic teſtimonials of his having gone through a regular courſe of learning.

Trials in order to Licenſe.

Becauſe it is highly reproachful to religion, and dangerous to the Church, to intruſt the holy miniſtry to weak and ignorant men, the Preſbytery ſhall try each Candidate, *as to his* knowledge of the Latin language, and of the Original languages in which the holy Scriptures were written: They ſhall examine *him*, on the Arts and Sciences; on Theology, natural and revealed; and on Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory. And, in order to make trial of *his* talents to explain and vindicate, and practically to enforce the doctrines of the Goſpel, the Preſbytery ſhall require of *him*, an Exegeſis on ſome common head of divinity; a Homily; a Preſbyterial exerciſe; a Lecture or explication of a portion of Scripture; and a popular Sermon:

Sermon: Or other similar exercises, to be held, at several successive sessions, till *They* shall have obtained satisfaction, as to *his* piety, literature, and aptness to teach in the Churches.

The study of Divinity must continue at least two years before license.

That the most effectual measures may be taken, to guard against *the admission of* insufficient men into the sacred office, it is recommended, that no Candidate, except in extraordinary cases, be licensed; unless, after his having completed the the usual course of academical studies, he shall have studied divinity, at least two years, under some approved Divine, or Professor of Theology.

Engagements required of Probationers, before license.

Before the Presbytery proceed to license the Candidate, the Moderator shall requre of him the following engagements: *viz.*

I. Do you believe the Scriptures, of the Old and New Testament, to be the word of God, the only infallible rule of Faith and Practice?

II. Do you sincerely receive and adopt, the Confession of Faith of this Church, as containing *the* system of doctrine taught in the holy Scriptures?

III. Do you promise to study the peace, unity, and purity of the Church?

IV. Do you promise to submit yourself, in the Lord, to the government of this Presbytery, or of any other Presbytery in the bounds of which you may be?

Manner of licensing.

The Candidate having answered these questions in the affirmative, and the Moderator having offered up a prayer suitable to the occasion, He shall address himself to the Candidate,

Candidate, to the following purpose: "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by that authority, which he hath given to his Church for its edification, we do license you, to preach the Gospel, wherever God in his providence may call you thereto: and, for this purpose, may the blessing of God rest upon you, and the Spirit of Christ fill your heart. *Amen.*" And record shall be made of the licensure, in the following form: *viz.*

Form of license. At the day of the Presbytery of having received sufficient testimonials, in favour of of his having gone through a regular course of literature; of his good moral character; and of his being in the communion of the Church; proceeded to take the usual parts of trial for his licensure: And he having given satisfaction, as to his accomplishments in literature; as to his experimental acquaintance with religion; and as to his proficiency in Divinity, and other studies; the Presbytery did, and hereby do express their approbation of all these parts of trial: and he having adopted the Confession of Faith of this Church, and satisfactorily answered the questions, appointed to be put to Candidates to be licensed, the Presbytery did, and hereby do license him, the said , to preach the Gospel of Christ, as a Probationer for the holy ministry, within the bounds of this Presbytery, or wherever he shall be orderly called.

Testimonials of a Probationer. When any Candidate shall, by the permission of *his* Presbytery, remove without its limits, an extract of this record, accompanied with a Presbyterial recommendation,

commendation, signed by the Clerk, shall be his testimonials, to the Presbytery under whose care he shall come.

Of the Election, and Ordination, of Bishops or Pastors.

A Church disposed to prepare a Call in order to their nation, shall ask the assistance of a Minister.

When any Probationer *shall have* preached, so much to the satisfaction of any Congregation *as* that the people appear disposed to receive him as their *minister*, the Session shall solicit the *presence* and counsel of some neighbouring Minister, *to assist them* in preparing a Call for him; unless highly inconvenient on account of distance: in which case they may proceed without such assistance.

The day for preparing the Call shall be previously appointed on a Lord's day.

On a Lord's day, immediately after public worship, it shall be intimated from the Pulpit, that all *the* members of that Congregation are requested to meet, on ensuing, at the Church, or usual place for holding public worship; then and there, if it be agreeable to them, to prepare a Call *for* to be their Pastor.

The Minister shall receive the votes of none but regular members, and who punctually pay towards the support of the Church.

On the day appointed, the Minister, whose assistance has been obtained, shall preach a sermon, at the usual season for public worship; and, after sermon, *He* shall announce to the People, that he will immediately proceed to take the votes of the Electors of that Congregation, in the case of whether or not he shall be chosen to be their *Minister*. In this election, no person shall be entitled

entitled to vote, who refuſes to ſubmit to the cenſures of the Church, regularly adminiſtred; or who does not contribute his juſt proportion, according to his own engagements, or the rules of that Church, to all its neceſſary expences.

When the People are not unanimous the Miniſter ſhall certify the number and circumſtances of the Diſſentients.

When the votes are taken, if it appear that a great proportion of the People are averſe from the Candidate, and cannot be induced to concur in the call, the aſſiſting *Miniſter* ſhall endeavour to diſſuade the Congregation from profecuting it further. But if the People be nearly, or entirely, unanimous; or if the majority ſhall inſiſt upon their right to call a Miniſter; then in that caſe, the Miniſter, after uſing his utmoſt endeavours to perſuade the Congregation to unanimity, ſhall proceed to draw a call in due form, and to have it ſubſcribed by the Electors; certifying, at the ſame time, the number and circumſtances of thoſe who do not concur in the Call: *all which proceedings ſhall* be laid before the Preſbytery, together with the call.

The form of a Call.

The Call ſhall be in the following, or like form: *viz.*

The Congregation of . being, on ſufficient grounds, well ſatisfied of the miniſterial qualifications of you
and having good hopes, from our paſt experience of your labours, that your miniſtrations in the Goſpel will be profitable to our ſpiritual intereſts, do earneſtly call, and deſire you, to undertake the Paſtoral office in ſaid Congregation; promiſing you, in the *diſcharge* of your duty, all proper ſupport, encouragement, and obedience,

in

in the Lord : And, that you may be free from worldly cares and avocations, we hereby promise, and oblige ourselves, to pay to you, the sum of in regular * payments, during the time of your being, and continuing, the regular Pastor of this Church. In testimony whereof, we have respectively subscribed our names, this day of A. D.

Attested by A. B. *Moderator of the meeting.*

A Call may, in certain cases, be subscribed by Elders or Deacons.

But if any Congregation shall choose to subscribe their Call, by their Elders and Deacons, or either, they shall be at liberty so to do : but it shall, in such case, be fully certified, to the Presbytery, by the Minister who presided, that they have been appointed, for this purpose, by a public vote of the Congregation ; and that the Call has been, in all other respects, prepared as above directed.

A call sufficient both for ordination & instalment.

When a Call shall be presented to any Minister or Candidate, it shall *always* be viewed as a sufficient petition from the people for his instalment. The acceptance of a Call, by a Minister or Candidate, shall always be considerd as a request, on his part, to be installed at the same time. And when a Candidate shall be ordained, in consequence of a Call from any Congregation, the Presbytery shall always, at *the same* time, ordain and instal him Pastor of that Congregation.

The

* This blank to be filled up with the words, quarterly, half yearly, or yearly, as may best suit the Congregation.

The Call must be presented to the Presbytery.

The Call, thus prepared *, shall be presented to the Presbytery, under whose care the person called shall be; that, if the Presbytery think it expedient to present the Call *to him*, it may be accordingly presented: And no Minister or Candidate shall receive a Call, but through the hands of the Presbytery.

How to proceed when the Call is to the Licentiate of another Presbytery.

If the Call be to the Licentiate of another Presbytery, in that case the Commissioners, deputed from the Congregation to prosecute the Call, shall produce, to that Judicatory, a certificate from their own Presbytery, regularly attested by the Moderator and Clerk, that they are in order. If that Presbytery present the Call to their Licentiate, and he be disposed to accept it, they shall then dismiss him from their jurisdiction, and require him to repair to that Presbytery, into the bounds of which he is called, and there to submit himself to the usual trials preparatory to ordination.

Trials for Ordination.

Trials for ordination, especially in a different Presbytery from that in which

* Inasmuch as the comfort and honor of the ministry greatly depends, on the easy and decent provision which is made for their families after their death; it is highly expedient, that each Congregation should deposit, in the widows fund, such a sum as shall be sufficient to secure, to the family of their Pastor after his death, one of the annuities promised by them to the Contributors: provided that the Corporation shall stipulate with them, that the said annuity shall be paid to the family of their Pastor, and to the families of his successors in the same charge forever, who shall die during the continuance of their pastoral relation to the said Congregation. And provided they further engage that no deposition, suspension, or removal, of any of their Pastors, shall ever deprive their families of the expected annuities: provided that such deposed, suspended, or removed Pastor shall continue, during his life, to pay his annual rate to the fund, or shall settle in another Congregation that has made a similar provision for their Pastor and his family.

which the Candidate was licenſed, ſhall conſiſt of a careful examination, *as to his acquaintance with experimental religion; as to his knowledge* of Philoſophy, Theology, Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, the Greek and Hebrew languages, and ſuch other branches of learning as to the Preſbytery may appear requiſite; *and as to his knowledge* of the Conſtitution, the rules and principles of the Government and Diſcipline of the Church; together with ſuch written diſcourſes, founded on the word of God, as to the Preſbytery ſhall ſeem proper. The Preſbytery, being fully ſatisfied with his qualifications for the ſacred office, ſhall appoint a convenient day for his ordination, which ought to be, if convenient, in that Church of which he is to be the *Miniſter*.

Preſbytery being conſtituted a ſermon ſhall be preached, &c.

The day appointed for ordination being come, and the Preſbytery convened, a member of the Preſbytery, previouſly appointed to that duty, ſhall preach a ſermon adapted to the occaſion. The ſame, or another member appointed to preſide in this buſineſs, ſhall afterwards briefly recite from the pulpit, in the audience of the people, the proceedings of the Preſbytery preparatory to this tranſaction: He ſhall point out the nature and importance of the ordinance; and endeavour to impreſs the audience with a proper ſenſe of the ſolemnity of the tranſaction.

Engagements required of thoſe who are ordained.

Then addreſſing himſelf to the Candidate, he ſhall propoſe to him the following queſtions: *viz.*

I. Do you believe the Scriptures, of the Old and New Teſtament, to be the word of God, the only infallible rule of Faith and Practice?

II. Do you ſincerely receive and adopt, the Confeſſion of Faith of this Church, as containing *the* ſyſtem of doctrine taught in the holy Scriptures ?

III. Do you approve of the Government and diſcipline of the Preſbyterian Church, as exerciſed in theſe United States ?

IV. Do you promiſe ſubjection to your Brethren in the Lord ?

V. Have you been induced, as far as you know your own heart, to ſeek the office of the holy miniſtry, *from* love to God, and a ſincere deſire to promote his glory in the Goſpel of his Son ?

VI. Do you promiſe to be zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths of the Goſpel, and the purity and peace of the Church ; whatever perſecution, or oppoſition, may ariſe unto you on that account ?

VII. Do you engage to be faithful and diligent, in the exerciſe of all private and perſonal duties, which become you as a Chriſtian and a Miniſter of the Goſpel ; as well as in all relative duties, and the public duties of your office, endeavouring to adorn the profeſſion of the Goſpel by your converſation ; and walking, with exemplary piety, before the flock, over which God ſhall make you Overſeer ?

Engagements required of the People.

The Candidate having anſwered theſe queſtions in the affirmative, the Moderator ſhall demand of the People :

I. Do you, the People of this Congregation, continue to profeſs your readineſs to receive , whom you have called, to be your *Miniſter ?*

II.

II. Do you promise to receive the word of truth from his mouth, with meekness and love; and to submit to him, with humility, in the due exercise of Discipline?

III. Do you promise to encourage him, in his arduous labour, and to assist his endeavours for your instruction and spiritual edification?

IV. And do you engage to continue to him, while he is your Pastor, that competent worldly maintenance which you have promised; and whatever else you may see needful, for the honour of religion, and his comfort among you?

Mode of ordination. The People having answered these questions, in the affirmative, by holding up their right hands, the Candidate shall kneel down, in the most convenient part of the Church: Then the presiding Bishop shall, by prayer, and with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, according to the Apostolic example, solemnly ordain him to the holy office of the Gospel ministry. Prayer being ended, he shall rise from his knees; and the Minister who presides shall first, and afterwards all the members of the Presbytery in their order, take him by the right hand, saying, in words to this purpose, "We give you the right hand of Fellowship, to take part of this ministry with us." After which the Minister presiding, or some other appointed for the purpose, shall give a solemn charge, in the name of God, to the newly ordained Bishop, and to the people, to persevere in the discharge of their mutual duties; and shall then, by prayer, recommend them both to the grace of God, and his holy keeping: and finally, after singing of a psalm, *shall* dismiss the Congregation with the usual blessing. And the Presbytery shall duly record the transaction.

Of

Of Tranſlation, or removing a Miniſter from one Charge to another.

Tranſlation to be made by the Preſbytery.

No Biſhop ſhall be tranſlated from one Church to another, nor ſhall he receive any Call for that purpoſe, but by the permiſſion of the Preſbytery.

Mode of procedure in tranſlations.

Any Church, deſiring to call a ſettled Miniſter from his preſent charge, ſhall, by Commiſſioners properly authorized, repreſent to the Preſbytery the ground on which they plead his removal. The Preſbytery, having maturely conſidered their plea, may, according as it appears more or leſs reaſonable, either recommend to them to deſiſt from proſecuting the Call; or may order it to be delivered, to the Miniſter to whom it is directed, together with a written citation, to him and his Congregation, to appear before the Preſbytery at *their* next meeting. This citation ſhall be read from the pulpit in that Church, by a member of the Preſbytery appointed for that purpoſe, immediately after public worſhip; ſo that, at leaſt, two ſabbaths ſhall intervene, betwixt the citation, and the meeting of the Preſbytery at which the cauſe of tranſlation is to be conſidered. The Preſbytery, being met, and having heard the parties, ſhall, upon the whole view of the caſe, either continue him in his former charge, or tranſlate him, as they ſhall deem to be moſt for the peace and edification of the Church; or refer the whole affair to the Synod, at their next meeting, for their advice and direction.

When

Mode of procedure when the Minister is of another Presbytery.

When the Congregation, calling any settled Minister, is within the limits of another Presbytery, that Congregation shall obtain leave, from the Presbytery to which they belong, to apply to the Presbytery of which he is a member: And that Presbytery, having cited him and his Congregation as before directed, shall proceed to hear and issue the cause. If they agree to the translation, they shall release him from his present charge; and having given him proper testimonials, shall require him to repair to that Presbytery, within the bounds of which the Congregation calling him lies, that the proper steps may be taken for his regular settlement in that Congregation: And the Presbytery, to which the Congregation belongs, having received an authenticated certificate of his release, under the hand of the Clerk of that Presbytery, shall proceed to instal him, in the Congregation, as soon as convenient. *Provided always*, that no Bishop or Pastor shall be translated, without his own consent previously obtained.

Instalment constitutes the pastoral relation &c.

When any Minister is to be settled in a Congregation, the instalment, which consists in constituting a pastoral relation between him and the people of that particular Church, may be performed, either by the Presbytery, or by a Committee appointed for that purpose; as may appear most expedient: and the following order shall be observed therein.

Notice of the day must be given.

A day shall be appointed for the instalment, at such time as may appear most convenient, and due notice thereof given to the Congregation.

When

A Sermon shall be delivered, &c.

When the Presbytery, or Committee, shall be convened and constituted, on the day appointed, a sermon shall be delivered, by some one of the members previously appointed thereto; immediately after which, the Bishop, who is to preside, shall state to the Congregation the design of their meeting and briefly recite the proceedings of the Presbytery relative thereto. And then, addressing himself to the *Minister* to be installed, shall propose to him the following or similar questions:

Installment consists in mutual engagements of Minister and People.

I. Are you now willing to take the charge of this Congregation, as their Pastor, agreeably to your declaration at accepting their Call?

II. Do you conscientiously believe and declare, as far as you know your own heart, that, in taking upon you this charge, you are influenced by a sincere desire to promote the glory of God, and the good of his Church?

III. Do you solemnly promise, that, by *the assistance of* the grace of God, you will endeavour faithfully to discharge all the duties of a Pastor to this Congregation, and will be careful, to maintain a deportment in all respects becoming a Minister of the Gospel of Christ, agreeably to your Ordination engagements? To all *these* having received satisfactory answers, He shall propose to the People the same, or *like* questions, as those directed under the head of ordination; which having been also satisfactorily answered, by holding up their right hand, in testimony of assent, He shall solemnly pronounce and declare the said Minister to be regularly constituted the Pastor of that Congrega-

tion.

tion. A charge shall then be given to both parties, as directed in the affair of ordination; and, after prayer and singing a psalm adapted to the transaction, the Congregation shall be dismissed with the usual benediction.

Elders and Heads of families shall give their right hand to their Minister.

It is highly becoming, that, after the solemnity of the instalment, the heads of Families of that Congregation who are then present, or at least the Elders, and those appointed to take care of the temporal concerns of that Church, should come forward to their Pastor, and give him their right hand, in token of cordial reception and affectionate regard.

Of resigning a Pastoral Charge.

The Congregation must be cited and heard.

When any *Minister* shall labour under such grievances, in his Congregation, as that he shall desire leave to resign his pastoral charge, the Presbytery shall cite *the* Congregation to appear, by their Commissioners, at their next meeting, to shew cause, if any they have, why the Presbytery should not accept the resignation. If the Congregation fail to appear, or if their reasons for retaining their Pastor be deemed by the Presbytery insufficient, he shall have leave granted to resign his pastoral charge; of which due record shall be made, and that Church shall be held to be vacant, till supplied again, in an orderly manner, with another *Minister*: And if any Congregation shall desire to be released from their Pastor, a similar process, *mutatis mutandis*, shall be observed.

Of

Of Miſſions.

When vacancies become ſo numerous, in any Preſbytery, that they cannot be ſupplied with the frequent adminiſtration of the Word and ordinances, it ſhall be proper for ſuch Preſbytery, or any vacant Congregation within their bounds, with the leave of the Preſbytery, to apply to any other Preſbytery, or to any Synod, or to the General Council, for ſuch aſſiſtance as they can afford. And, when any Preſbytery ſhall ſend any of their Miniſters or Probationers to diſtant vacancies, the Miſſionary ſhall be ready to produce his credentials to the Preſbytery or Preſbyteries, through the bounds of which he may paſs, or at leaſt *to* a Committee thereof, and obtain their approbation. And the General Council may, of their own knowledge, ſend miſſions, to any part, to plant Churches, or to ſupply vacancies: And, for this purpoſe, may direct any Preſbytery to ordain *Evangeliſts*, or *Miniſters* without relation to particular Churches: *Provided always*, that ſuch miſſions be made with the conſent of the parties appointed; and that the Judicatory ſending them make the neceſſary proviſion for their ſupport and reward in the performance of this ſervice.

Of Moderators.

A Moderator neceſſary.

It is equally neceſſary in the Judicatories of the Church, as in other aſſemblies, that there ſhould be a Moderator or Preſident; that the buſineſs may be conducted with order and diſpatch.

The

The authority and duty of the Moderator.

The Moderator is to be considered as possessing, by delegation from the whole body, all authority necessary for the preservation of order; for convening and adjourning the Judicatory; and directing its operations according to the rules of the Church. He is to propose to the Judicatory every subject of deliberation that comes before them. He may propose what appears to him the most regular and speedy way of bringing any business to issue. He shall prevent the members from interrupting each other; and require them, in speaking, always to address the Chair. He shall prevent a speaker from deviating from the subject; and from using personal reflections. He shall silence those who refuse to obey order. He shall prevent members who attempt to leave the Judicatory without leave obtained from him. He shall, at a proper season, when the deliberations are ended, put the question and call the votes. If the Judicatory be equally divided he shall possess the casting vote. If he be not willing to decide, he shall put the question a second time: and if the Judicatory be again equally divided, and he decline to give his vote, the question shall be lost. In all questions he shall give a concise and clear state of the object of the vote; and the vote being taken, shall then declare how the question is *decided*. *And he* shall, likewise, *when properly advised*, convene the Judicatory, by his circular letter, before the ordinary time of meeting.

The Minister perpetual Moderator of the Church Session.

The Pastor of the Congregation shall always be the Moderator of the Church Session; except when, for prudential reasons, it may appear advisable.

viſeable that ſome other Miniſter ſhould be invited to preſide: in which caſe the Paſtor may, with the concurrence of the Seſſion, invite ſuch other Miniſter as they may ſee meet, belonging to the ſame Preſbytery, to preſide in that affair. In this Judicatory, therefore, the Moderator is continual: but, in the vacancy of any Church, the Moderator ſhall be the Miniſter ſent to them by the Preſbytery; or invited by the Seſſion to preſide on a particular occaſion. In Congregations, where there are Colleagues, they ſhall, when preſent, alternately preſide in the Seſſion.

The Moderators of the other Judicatories how to be ch ſen.

The Moderator of the Preſbytery ſhall be choſen from year to year, or at every meeting of the Preſbytery, as the Preſbytery may think beſt. The Moderator, of the Synod, and of the General Council, ſhall be choſen at each meeting of thoſe Judicatories: and the laſt Moderator preſent ſhall open the meeting with a ſermon, and ſhall hold the chair till a new Moderator be choſen.

Of Privilege.

It ſhall be the privilege of any member of a Judicatory to ſpeak, in his proper order, to any queſtion, *with* leave from the Moderator. The Moderator ſhall give leave to the perſon who firſt riſes: but if two, or more members, are judged to have riſen at the ſame time, the Moderator ſhall determine which ſhall ſpeak firſt. Any member ſhall have a right to propoſe any queſtion, relative to the buſineſs of the Church, *or to* the intereſts of religion, and to have it put to vote; provided only, that his motion be ſeconded

conded by another member. If any member conceive his priveleges to be unjuſtly controuled by the Moderator, he may appeal to the Judicatory, who ſhall determine the point of privilege by a vote ; and the Moderator and member muſt ſubmit to the ſuffrage of the Judicatory.

Of Clerks.

Every Judicatory ſhall chooſe a Clerk, to record their tranſactions, whoſe continuance ſhall be during pleaſure. It ſhall be the duty of the Clerk, beſides recording the tranſactions, to preſerve them carefully ; and to grant extracts from them, whenever properly required : and ſuch extracts, under the hand of the Clerk, *ſhall* be conſidered *as* authentic vouchers, of the fact which they declare, in any eccleſiaſtical Judicatory, and to every part of the Church.

Of vacant Congregations aſſembling for Public Worſhip.

Conſidering that the number of our Congregations is ſo greatly ſuperior to the number of *Miniſters* who are to ſupply them, and that this diſproportion is daily increaſing, in the extended and growing ſettlements on the frontiers ; and conſidering the great importance of weekly aſſembling the people, for the public worſhip of God ; in order thereby to improve their knowledge ; to confirm their habits of worſhip, and their deſire of the public ordinances ; to augment their reverence *for the moſt high God* ; and to promote the charitable affections *which* unite men moſt firmly in ſociety : It is recommended, *that* every vacant Congregation meet together,

on

on the Lord's day, at one or more places, for the purpose of prayer, *singing* praises, and reading the holy Scriptures, together with the works of such approved Divines, as the Presbytery, within whose bounds they are, may recommend, and they may be able to procure; and that the Elders or Deacons be the persons who shall preside, and select the portions of Scripture, and of the other books, to be read; and to see that the whole be conducted in a becoming and orderly manner.

Of Commissioners to the General Council.

Commissioners shall be appointed at last stated meeting of the Presbytery.

The Commissioners to the General Council shall always be appointed, by the Presbytery from which they come, at its last stated meeting immediately preceding the meeting of the General Council; provided, that there be a sufficient interval, between that time and the meeting of the Council, for the Commissioners to attend their duty in due season: otherwise, the Presbytery may make the appointment at any stated meeting, not more than seven months preceding the meeting of the Council. And as much as possible to prevent all failure in the representation of the Presbyteries, arising from unforeseen accidents to those first appointed, it may be expedient for each Presbytery, in the room of each Commissioner, to appoint also an alternate Commissioner, to supply his place, in case of necessary absence.

Form of a Commission.

Each Commissioner, before his name shall be enrolled as a member of the Council, shall produce, from his Presbytery,

a

commiſſion under the hand of the Moderator *and* Clerk, in the following or like form : *viz.*

" The Preſbytery of being met at on the day of doth hereby appoint Biſhop of the Congregation of [or ruling Elder in the Congregation of as the caſe may be ;]" (to which the Preſbytery may, if they think proper, make a ſubſtitution in the following form, " or in caſe of his abſence, then Biſhop of the Congregation of [or ruling Elder in the Congregation of as the caſe may be ;]") to be a Commiſſioner, on behalf of this Preſbytery, to the next General Council of the Preſbyterian Church in the United States of America, to meet at on the day of A. D. or wherever, and whenever the ſaid Council may happen to ſit ; to conſult, vote, and determine, on all things that may come before that body, according to the principles and conſtitutions of this Church, and the Word of God. And of his diligence herein, he is to render an account at his return.

Signed, by order of the Preſbytery,
Moderator,
Clerk."

And the Preſbytery ſhall make record of the appointment.

Commiſſions ſhall be delivered to the Clerk at the firſt Seſſion.

Theſe commiſſions ſhall, if poſſible, be delivered to the Clerk of the Council, in proper ſeaſon, *that he may* have the rolls of the Council completed before the firſt ſeſſion. Commiſſions, not *produced at the opening of the Council*, ſhall afterwards

wards be delivered only in the intervals between the seſſions. Every *Commiſſioner* ſhall have a right to deliberate in the Council; but none ſhall be entitled to vote, until their names have been enrolled by the Clerk, and their commiſſions publicly read, and filed among the papers of the Council.

The Council ſhall meet once a year.

The General Council ſhall meet, at leaſt, once in every year, on the Tueſday of and afterwards on their own adjournments. If there be not a ſufficient number, for the tranſaction of buſineſs, convened before 12 o'clock, on that day, thoſe who are preſent ſhall have power to adjourn, from day to day, till a ſufficient number ſhall have met to conſtitute a Council.

And ſhall be opened with a Sermon.

On the day, to which the General Council ſtands adjourned, and between the hours of eleven and twelve, the Moderator of the laſt General Council, if preſent; or, in caſe of his abſence, the ſenior *Miniſter* preſent, ſhall open the meeting with a ſermon. After ſermon, the Members being in the houſe where the Council is to hold its ſeſſions, the ſame *Miniſter* who preached ſhall, by prayer, publicly implore the bleſſing and direction of Almighty God; and ſhall continue to preſide till a new moderator be choſen. For this purpoſe he ſhall call for the commiſſions of thoſe preſent; which being read, and the names of the Members enrolled in order, *if there be a Quorum, they* ſhall *chuſe* a Moderator.

Mode of diſſolving the Council.

Each ſeſſion of the Council, as of all the other Judicatories of the Church, ſhall be introduced and concluded with prayer. And the whole buſineſs of the

the Council being *finiſhed*, and the vote being taken for diſſolving the preſent Council, the Moderator ſhall ſay from the Chair: "By virtue of the authority delegated to me by the Church, let this General Council be diſſolved; and I do hereby diſſolve it, and require another Council, choſen in the ſame manner, to meet at on the day of A. D. ." After which he ſhall pray, and return thanks to God for his great mercy and goodneſs, and pronounce, on thoſe preſent, the *Apoſtolic* benediction.

Expences of Delegates to be defrayed.

In order, as far as poſſible, to procure a reſpectable and full delegation to all our Judicatories, it is proper, that the expences of Miniſters and Elders, in their attendance on theſe Judicatories, be defrayed, by the bodies which they reſpectively repreſent.

Forms of Proceſs in the Judicatories of this Church.

With regard to Scandals, or offences that may ariſe in our Churches, we agree to obſerve the following rules of proceeding.

I. Inaſmuch as all baptized perſons are Members of the Church, they are under its care, and ſubject to its government and diſcipline; and, when they have arrived at the years of diſcretion, they are bound to perform all the duties of Church-members.

II. No accuſation ſhall be admitted, as the foundation of a proceſs before an eccleſiaſtical Judicatory, but where ſuch offences are alledged, as appear, from the Word of God, to merit the public notice and cenſure of the Church:

and,

and, in the accuſation, the times, places, and circumſtances, ſhould be aſcertained, if poſſible; that the accuſed may have an opportunity to prove an *alibi*; or to extenuate, or alleviate his crime.

III. No complaint or information, on the ſubject of perſonal and private injuries, ſhall be admitted; unleſs thoſe means of reconciliation, and of privately reclaiming the offender, have been uſed, which are required by Chriſt, Mat. XVIII. 15, 16. And, in all caſes, the eccleſiaſtical Judicatories, in receiving accuſations, in conducting proceſſes, or inflicting cenſures, ought to avoid, as far as poſſible, the divulging of offences, to the ſcandal of the Church: becauſe the unneceſſary ſpreading of ſcandal hardens and enrages the guilty, grieves the godly, and diſhonours religion. And if any private Chriſtian ſhall induſtriouſly ſpread the knowledge of an offence, unleſs in proſecuting it before the proper Judicatories of the Church, he ſhall be liable to cenſure, as an uncandid ſlanderer of his brother.

IV. When complaint is made of a crime, cognizable before any Judicatory, no more ſhall be done at the firſt meeting, unleſs by conſent of parties, than to give the accuſed a copy of each charge with the names of the witneſſes to ſupport it; and a citation of all concerned, to appear at the next meeting of the Judicatory, to have the matter fully heard and decided. Notice ſhall be given to the parties concerned, at leaſt ten days, previouſly to the meeting of the Judicatory.

V.

V. The Judicatory, in many cases, may find it more for edification, to send some Members to converse, in a private manner, with the accused person; and, if he confess guilt, to endeavour to bring him to repentance; than to proceed immediately to citation.

VI. When an accused person, or a witness, refuses to obey the citation, he shall be cited a second and a third time; and if he still continue to refuse, he shall be excluded from the communion of the Church, for his contumacy; until he repent.

VII. No crime shall be considered as established by a single witness.

VIII. The oath, or affirmation, to be taken by a witness, shall be in the following, or like terms: "*I* solemnly promise, in the presence of the omniscient and heart-searching God, that *I* will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of *my* knowledge, in the matter in which *I am* called to witness, as *I* shall answer it to the great Judge of quick and dead."

IX. The trial shall be open, fair, and impartial: the witnesses shall be examined in the presence of the accused, or at least after he shall have received due citation to attend; *and he* shall be permitted to ask any questions tending to his own exculpation.

X. No witness, afterwards to be examined, shall be present, during the examination of another witness, on the same cause.

XI. The testimony, given by witnesses, must be faithfully recorded, and read to them, for their approbation or subscription.

XII. The judgment ſhall be regularly entered on the records of the Judicatory; and the parties ſhall be allowed copies of the whole proceedings, if they demand them: And, in caſe of references or appeals, the Judicatory *appealed from* ſhall ſend authentic copies of the whole *proceſs* to the higher Judicatories.

XIII. The perſon found guilty ſhall be admoniſhed, or rebuked, or excluded from Church privileges, as the caſe ſhall appear to deſerve; and this only till he give ſatisfactory evidence of repentance.

XIV. The ſentence ſhall be publiſhed, only in the Church or Churches which have been offended: or, if it be a matter of ſmall importance, and it ſhall appear moſt for edification not to publiſh it, it may paſs only in the Judicatory.

XV. Such groſs offenders, as will not be reclaimed by the private or public admonitions of the Church, are to be cut off from its communion, agreeably to our Lord's direction, *Mat. XVIII.* 17. and the Apoſtolic injunction reſpecting the inceſtuous perſon, *I Cor. V.* 1——5. But as this is the higheſt *cenſure* of the Church, and of the moſt ſolemn nature, it is not to be *inflicted*, without the advice and conſent of, at leaſt, the Preſbytery under whoſe care the particular Church is, to which the offender belongs; or the advice of a higher Judicatory, as the caſe may appear to require.

XVI. All proceſſes, in caſes of ſcandal ſhall commence, within the ſpace of one year, after the crime ſhall have been committed; unleſs it ſhall have become recently flagrant.

XVII.

XVII. When any Member ſhall remove from one *Congregation* to another, he ſhall produce proper teſtimonials of his Church-membership, before he be admitted to Church-privileges; unleſs the Church, to which he removes, has other ſatisfactory means of information.

Of Proceſs againſt a Biſhop or Miniſter.

As the ſucceſs of the Goſpel, in a great meaſure, depends upon the credit and good report of its Miniſters, each Preſbytery ought, with the greateſt attention, to watch over all their Members; and *to* be careful to cenſure them, when neceſſary, with impartiality; either for perſonal crimes, which they may commit in common with other men: or thoſe that are vocational, ariſing from the manner in which they may diſcharge their important office.

I. Proceſs, againſt a Goſpel Miniſter, ſhall always be entered before the Preſbytery of which he is a member: *But*, in caſe of crimes committed without the limits of that Preſbytery, evidence ſhall be taken, at the inſtance of *the* Preſbytery within which the offence has been committed; and the whole proof, authenticated under the hand of the Moderator and Clerk, ſhall be tranſmitted to the Judicatory before which he is to be tried.

II. Proceſs, againſt a Goſpel Miniſter, ſhall not be entered upon; unleſs ſome perſon or perſons undertake to make out the charge; or when common fame ſo loudly proclaims the ſcandal, that the Preſbytery find it neceſſary to proſecute, and ſearch into the matter, for the honour of religion.

III.

III. The ſucceſs of the Goſpel greatly depends on *the unblemiſhed* character of *its Miniſters*, *their* ſoundneſs in the Faith, and holy, and exemplary converſation. It is the duty of all Chriſtians to be very cautious in taking up an ill report of any man, but eſpecially of a Miniſter *of the* Goſpel. If, therefore, any man know a Miniſter guilty of a private cenſurable fault, he ſhould warn him in private; but if he perſiſt in it, or it become public, he ſhould apply, to ſome other Biſhop of *the* Preſbytery, for his advice in the matter.

IV. When complaint is laid before the Preſbytery, it muſt be reduced to writing, and nothing farther be done at the firſt meeting, unleſs by conſent of parties, than giving the Miniſter a full copy of the charges, with the names of the witneſſes annexed thereto; and citing all parties, and their witneſſes, to appear and be heard at the next meeting; which meeting ſhall not be ſooner than ten days after ſuch citation.

V. At the next meeting of the Preſbytery, the charges muſt be read to him, and his anſwers heard and recorded. If it appear neceſſary to proceed farther, the Preſbytery ought to labour to bring him to confeſſion; and if he confeſs, and the matter *be* baſe and flagitious; ſuch as drunkenneſs, uncleanneſs, or crimes of a higher nature; however penitent he may appear, to the ſatisfaction of all, the Preſbytery muſt, without delay, ſuſpend him from the exerciſe of his office, or depoſe him from the miniſtry; and appoint him a due time to confeſs publicly before the Congregation offended, and *to* profeſs his repentance.

VI

VI. The profecutor *ſhall* be previouſly warned, that, if he fail to prove the charges, he muſt himſelf be cenſured, as a ſlanderer of the Goſpel miniſtry.

VII. If a Miniſter, accuſed of atrocious crimes, being three times duly cited, ſhall refuſe to attend the Preſbytery, he muſt be immediately ſuſpended: and if, *after another citation*, he ſtill refuſe to attend, he ſhall be depoſed as contumacious.

VIII. If the Miniſter, when he appears, will not confeſs, but denies the facts alledged againſt him; if, on hearing the witneſſes, the charges appear important and well ſupported, the Preſbytery muſt, nevertheleſs, cenſure him; and ſuſpend or depoſe him, according to the nature of the offence.

IX. Hereſy and ſchiſm may be of ſuch a nature as to infer depoſition: but errors ought to be carefully conſidered; whether they ſtrike at the vitals of religion, and are induſtriouſly ſpread; or whether they ariſe from the weakneſs of the human underſtanding, and are not likely to do much hurt.

X. *A Miniſter, under proceſs for hereſy or ſchiſm*, ſhould be treated with chriſtian and brotherly tenderneſs; frequent conferences *ought to be held with him*, and *proper* admonitions *adminiſtred*: *yet*, in ſome more dangerous caſes, ſuſpenſion becomes neceſſary; but a Synod ſhould be conſulted in ſuch caſes.

XI. If the Preſbytery find, on trial, that the matter complained of amounts to no more than ſuch acts of infirmity, as may be amended and the People ſatisfied, ſo as little or nothing remains to hinder his uſefulneſs; they ſhall take all prudent meaſures to remove the offence.

XII.

XII. A Minister, deposed for scandalous conduct, may not be restored, on his deepest sorrow for sin, without some time of eminent and exemplary, humble and edifying conversation, to heal the wound made by his scandal.

XIII. As soon as a Minister is deposed, his Congregation shall be declared vacant.

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

Chap. XX.

IV. And becauſe the powers which God hath ordained, and the liberty which Chriſt hath purchaſed, are not intended by God to deſtroy, but mutually to uphold and preſerve one another; they who, upon pretence of Chriſtian liberty, ſhall oppoſe any lawful power, or the lawful exerciſe of it, whether it be civil or eccleſiaſtical, reſiſt the ordinance of God. And for their publiſhing of ſuch opinions, or maintaining of ſuch practices, as are contrary to the light of nature, or to the known principles of Chriſtianity, whether concerning faith, worſhip, or converſation; or to the power of godlineſs; or ſuch erroneous opinions or practices, as either, in their own nature, or in the manner of publiſhing or maintaining them, are deſtructive to the external peace and order which Chriſt hath eſtabliſhed in the Church; they may lawfully be called to account, and proceeded againſt by the cenſures of the Church.

Chap. XXIII.

III. Civil Magiſtrates may not aſſume to themſelves the adminiſtration of the Word and Sacraments; or the power of the keys of the kingdom of Heaven; or, in the leaſt, interfere in matters of Faith. Yet, as nurſing Fathers, it is the duty of Civil Magiſtrates to protect the Church of our common Lord, without giving the preference to any denomination of Chriſtians above the reſt, in ſuch a manner, that all eccleſiaſtical perſons whatever ſhall enjoy the full,

full, free, and unqueſtioned liberty of diſcharging, every part of their ſacred function, without violence or danger. And, as Jeſus Chriſt hath appointed a regular Government and Diſcipline in his Church, no Law, of any Commonwealth, ſhould interfere with, let, or hinder, the due exerciſe thereof, among the voluntary members of *any* denomination of Chriſtians, according to their own profeſſion and belief. It is the duty of Civil Magiſtrates to protect the perſon and good name of all their people, in ſuch an effectual manner as that no perſon be ſuffered, either upon pretence of religion or of infidelity, to offer any indignity, violence, abuſe, or injury to any other perſon whatſoever: and to take order, that all religious and eccleſiaſtical Aſſemblies be held, without moleſtation or diſturbance.

Chap. XXXI.

I. * For the better government and further edification of the Church, there ought to be ſuch Aſſemblies as are commonly called Synods or Councils: and it belongeth to the Overſeers and other Rulers of the particular Churches, by virtue of their office, and the power which Chriſt hath given them for edification and not for deſtruction, to appoint ſuch Aſſemblies; and to convene together in them, as often as they ſhall judge it expedient for the good of the Church.

* *This is propoſed to be ſubſtituted in room of the firſt and ſecond ſections of this Chapter.*

THE DIRECTORY,

FOR THE

PUBLIC WORSHIP OF GOD,

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA;

As revised by the COMMITTEE OF SYNOD appointed for that Purpose.

Let all things be done decently, and in order.

1 Cor. XIV. 40.

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PREFACE.

THE Presbyterian Church in America, from small beginnings, through the great goodness of God, hath risen to be a numerous and respectable body. It is of the last importance, that great care be taken to preserve, in this extensive community, not only soundness of doctrine, but also purity of manners, and regularity of worship.

This Church firmly believes, that her doctrines, and modes of worship, are most agreeable to the Word of God; to the Practice of the Primitive Church in the three first Centuries; and to the best reformed Churches. She thinks it the indispensible duty of all her people, to use their utmost endeavours, to have regular settled Ministers of their own persuasion; and stated worship, in their own way, every Lord's day.

At the same time, the Presbyterian Church maintains a high respect for the other Protestant Churches of this Country; though several of them differ from her in some forms of government and Modes of worship: particularly for the regular Congregational Churches to the eastward; for the Associate, Low Dutch, and German, reformed Churches; and for the Lutheran and Episcopal Churches.

In places where there are only a few Presbyterians, and they are not able to have worship usually in their own way; it is recommended to them, to attend with the Christian brethren, of any of the above denominations, which may be most convenient, rather than spend their Sabbaths without public worship. But this Church warns all her People against illiterate, vagrant, and

and designing persons, who, under pretence of greater zeal and strictness than others, only go about to make a party. It is much better for them, to stay at home on the Lord's day with their families, than to encourage those men, who, by condemning regular, known and pious Churches, give too much reason to suspect that their own views are dangerous and wrong.

Although the Presbyterian Church believes her Government and worship, as well as her Faith, to be the purest and best; yet these are far from being perfect. This imperfection, however, is not so much in her constitution, as in carrying her government, and modes of worship into effect. The Form of government and discipline is intended to obviate the imperfection, in the one case; and the following directory for worship, in the other.

One great and apparent imperfection, attending the public worship of this Church, as well as that of other denominations (for which we have great reason to be deeply humbled before God) is the manifest deficiency of solemn gravity, holy reverence, and a devotional spirit, in the time of performing divine service. It is absolutely necessary that something be done to revive the spirit and appearance of devotion. Where there is real devotion; there the appearance of it will be. This, we doubt not, is the case with a number, through divine grace, in all our Congregations. It is readily granted, that there may be the appearance, without the spirit of devotion; but there cannot be the spirit, without the appearance: and, did we attend more to the appearance, it might have a happy tendency to awaken and revive a devotional spirit.

Many

Many things seem to contribute to banish the appearance of devotion from our worshipping Assemblies.

I. Persons going out and in, during divine service, is an odious practice. It is highly offensive to God, disturbs the Congregation, and mars their worship; and is never to be allowed, but in cases of absolute necessity. The Rulers of every Church ought to be careful to correct this disorder.

II. Another evil, increasing in our public worship, and tending to destroy the spirit and appearance of devotion, is, that many, in some of our Congregations, do not join in singing the praises of God. Every person ought to keep his eyes fixed upon his book, his heart engaged, and his voice employed in this delightful service; and to sing, with solemn reverence and composure, as in the presence of the most High. None can justly pretend, as an excuse, their want of voice, or their want of an ear for music; for there is no person who cannot, at least in a low voice, follow the tune: And, if the Officers of the Church be careful, that all have books and do sing, there is reason to hope, that, with the divine blessing, the spirit and appearance of devotion will be restored to this branch of our worship.

III. There is a want of devotion, awfully apparent in our Congregations, during the time of public prayer. Some are gazing about, some turning their back to the Minister, and others putting themselves into different attitudes of ease; and but few, either are in the posture, or have the appearance of devotion. It is the indispensible duty of the whole Congregation, seriously and

and devoutly, to join with the Miniſter in offering up the deſires of their hearts unto God. There ought not to be a wandering heart, a gazing eye, a careleſs or indevout poſture, in any part of divine ſervice. The ſcriptural poſtures, in prayer, are, in general, ſtanding or kneeling; the former of which is in uſe, with us, in the Church; and the latter, in the Family. In this duty, All ought to put themſelves into the moſt devout attitude, as in the preſence of the holy God, having their eyes fixed, covered or cloſed; and ſo continue throughout the whole of the ſervice: and we doubt not but a due attention to the poſture in prayer would have a happy tendency to bring on a praying frame of mind, and to revive a devotional ſpirit.

IV. As the reading of the holy Scriptures is a very important part of divine worſhip, it is much to be lamented, that this ſhould be neglected in any of our Congregations. It is provided for, in the Directory, that, where it has not been uſed, it ſhould be introduced and faithfully practiſed. In order to give ſolemnity to this part of worſhip, and to teſtify our reverence for the Word of God, it would be decent, and not improper, for the whole Congregation to ſtand up, during the reading of the Scriptures; as was the uſage under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, and among the primitive Chriſtians. It is alſo recommended, that all have their Bibles; and that they, ſilently and devoutly, follow the Miniſter while he is reading. Thus the ſpirit of devotion will be promoted and cheriſhed.

V. There are alſo ſome things amiſs, while the Miniſter is preaching, which ſhould be corrected. None ought to ſtand up; much leſs to turn

turn their back upon the Miniſter; to place themſelves in ſluggiſh or careleſs poſtures; or to indulge to ſleep, whiſpering or laughing. All ought, ſeriouſly and gravely, to attend to the whole of the inſtruction or exhortation; and to receive it with faith and love. Were theſe things duly obſerved, during the preaching of the Word, there would probably be fewer complaints among us of its want of ſucceſs.

Now may God, of his infinite mercy, grant, that ſolemn reverence, and a devotional ſpirit, may be revived and flouriſh, in all our Churches, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*

THE

THE DIRECTORY, &c.

Of the Sanctification of the LORD'S DAY.

IT is the duty of every person to remember the Lord's Day, and to prepare for it, before its approach. All worldly business, should be so ordered, and seasonably laid aside, as that we may not be hindered thereby from sanctifying the Sabbath. as the holy Scriptures require.

The whole day is to be kept holy to the Lord, and to be employed in the public and private exercises of religion. Therefore, it is requisite, that there be an holy resting, all the day, from unnecessary labours; and an abstaining from those recreations, which may be lawful on other days; and also, as much as possible, from worldly thoughts and conversation.

Let the provisions, for the support of the family on that day, be so ordered, that servants or others be not improperly detained from the public worship of God; nor hindered from sanctifying the Sabbath.

Let every person and family, in the morning, by secret and private prayer, for themselves and others, especially for the assistance of God to their Minister, and for a blessing upon his ministry; by reading the scriptures; and by holy meditation; prepare for communion with God in his public ordinances.

The

Let the people be careful to assemble at the appointed time, that, being all present at the beginning, they may unite, with one heart, in all the parts of public worship: and let none unnecessarily depart, till after the blessing be pronounced.

Let the time, after the solemn services of the congregation in public are over, be spent in reading; meditation; repeating of sermons; catechising; religious conversation; prayer for a blessing upon the public ordinances; the singing of psalms, hymns, or spiritual songs; visiting the sick; relieving the poor; and in performing such like duties of piety, charity and mercy.

Of the assembling of the Congregation, and their behaviour during Divine Service.

When the time appointed for public worship is come, let the people enter the Church, and take their seats, in a decent, grave, and reverent manner. And, after the Congregation is assembled, the Minister shall begin the service with prayer, to the following purpose:

'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who 'art, and wast, and art to come; We, who are 'unworthy of the least of all thy mercies, humbly 'present ourselves in thy courts, to offer homage, 'adoration, and praise, to Thee, our Creator, our 'Redeemer, and our God. Enable us, O Lord, 'by thy good Spirit, to attend to the holy duties 'to which thou art calling us at this time, without 'distraction of mind, and with reverence and godly 'fear. Admit us, we beseech thee, with humble 'boldness, to enter into the holiest, by the blood 'of Jesus, by the new and living way, which he 'hath consecrated for us, through the vail.——

'Inſtruct us from thy holy word. May we read 'it with wiſe and underſtanding hearts. Prepare 'us for ſinging thy praiſes, that we may make me-'lody in our hearts unto the Lord, and offer 'up an acceptable ſervice to our God. Teach 'us to pray, inſpire us with a ſpirit of devotion, 'enable us to exerciſe faith in all the parts of 'divine worſhip. And let all be done to the 'glory of the Father, of the Son, and of the 'Holy Ghoſt; and graciouſly accept us, through 'Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*'

This, and all the other prayers in the Directory, may and ought to be varied, according to the variety of circumſtances which may occur; agreeably to the views and judgment of every miniſter. Thus the ſpirit of prayer will be encouraged; and the undue reſtraint of this ſpirit, which is the too frequent effect of Forms of prayer, will be guarded againſt.

In the time of public worſhip, let all the people attend with gravity and reverence; forbearing to read any thing, except what the miniſter is then reading or citing; abſtaining from all whiſperings, from ſalutations of perſons preſent or coming in; and from gazing about, ſleeping, ſmiling, and all other indecent behaviour.

If any one be prevented from being preſent at the beginning of ſervice, he ought not, when he enters the Church, to betake himſelf to his private devotion; but to compoſe his mind, and reverently join in the public worſhip, with the Congregation.

Of the public reading of the Holy Scriptures.

The reading of the holy Scriptures, in the Congregation, is a part of the public worſhip of God; and

and ought to be performed by the Miniſters and Teachers.

All the canonical books, of the old and new Teſtament, ſhall be publicly read, from the moſt approved tranſlation, in the vulgar tongue, that all may hear and underſtand.

How large a portion ſhall be read at once is left to the diſcretion of every Miniſter: however, in each ſervice, he ought to read, at leaſt, one chapter; and more, when the chapters are ſhort, or the connection requires it. He may, when he thinks it expedient, expound any part of what is read; always having regard to the time, that neither reading, ſinging, praying, preaching, or any other ordinance, be diſproportionate the one to the other; nor the whole rendered too ſhort or too tedious.

Of the ſinging of Pſalms.

It is the duty of Chriſtians to praiſe God, by ſinging pſalms and hymns, publicly in the Church, as alſo privately in the family.

In ſinging the praiſes of God, we are to ſing with the ſpirit, and with the underſtanding alſo; making melody, in our hearts, unto the Lord. It is alſo proper, that we cultivate ſome knowledge of the rules of muſic; that we may praiſe God with our voices, as well as with our hearts.

The whole congregation ſhould be furniſhed with books, and ought to join in this part of worſhip. It is proper to ſing without parceling out the pſalm, line by line. The practice of reading the pſalm, line by line, was introduced in times of ignorance, when many in the Congregation could not read: therefore, it is recommended, that it be laid aſide, as far as convenient.

The

The proportion, of the time of public worſhip to be ſpent in ſinging, is left to the prudence of every Miniſter: but it is recommended, that more time be allowed, for this excellent part of divine ſervice, than has been uſual in moſt of our Churches.

Of public Prayer before Sermon.

After the introductory prayer, reading the word, and ſinging praiſe; the Miniſter is to proceed to a more extenſive adoration of God, confeſſion of ſin, thankſgiving for mercies, ſupplication for bleſſings, and interceſſion for others; in a longer prayer, to this effect:

'O God, thou art our God, early will we 'ſeek thee; our God, and we will praiſe thee; 'our father's God, and we will exalt thee. 'Thou art very great, cloathed with honor and 'majeſty. Thou covereſt thyſelf with light as 'with a garment; and in thee is no dark-'neſs at all.

'Thou art God thyſelf alone; and, beſides thee, 'there is none elſe. The heavens declare thy 'glory, and the firmament ſheweth forth thy 'handy work. The inviſible things of God, 'from the creation of the world, are clearly 'ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are 'made, even thine eternal power and Godhead.

'Thou art tranſcendently great in all thy 'perfections. Thou art glorious in holineſs, 'fearful in praiſes, doing wonders. Who, in 'the heavens, can be compared unto the Lord? 'Who, among the ſons of the mighty, can be 'likened unto thee, O Lord God of hoſts? As

'the

' the heavens are high above the earth, so are
' thy thoughts above our thoughts, and thy ways
' above our ways. All nations, before thee, are
' as the drop of a bucket, or the small dust of the
' balance; and thou takest up the isles as a very
' little thing: They are as nothing, and counted
' to thee less than nothing and vanity.

' Thou art the eternal, immortal and un-
' changeable God. Before the mountains were
' brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the
' earth and the world, from everlasting to ever-
' lasting thou art God; the same, yesterday, to day;
' and forever.

' Thou art the omnipresent God. None can
' hide himself in secret places, that thou canst not
' see him, for thou fillest heaven and earth with
' thy presence.

' Thou art the omniscient Jehovah. All
' things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him
' with whom we have to do. Thou understandest
' our thoughts afar off: There is not a word in
' our tongue, but, lo! O Lord, thou knowest it
' altogether.

' Thy wisdom is unsearchable. Thine under-
' standing, O Lord, is infinite. Thou tellest the
' number of the stars, and calleſt them all by their
' names. Thou art wonderful in counsel, excel-
' lent in working, wise in heart, and mighty in
' strength. O the depth of the wisdom and know-
' ledge of God! how unsearchable are his judg-
' ments, and his ways past finding out?

' Thy sovereignty is inconteſtable. Thou
' doſt according to thy will, in the armies of hea-
' ven, and among the inhabitants of the earth,
' and none can stay thy hand, or say unto thee,
' what doest thou.

' Thy

' Thy power is irreſiſtible We know, O
' God, that thou canſt do every thing. All pow-
' er is thine, both in heaven and in earth : Thou
' killeſt, and thou makeſt alive : Thou wound-
' eſt, and thou healeſt : And there is none that
' can deliver out of thy hand.

' Thou art a God of unſpotted purity, and
' perfect rectitude. Thou art holy, O thou
' that inhabiteſt the praiſes of Iſrael. Holy and
' and reverent is thy name ; and we give thanks
' at the remembrance of thy holineſs. Thou
' art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity ;
' neither ſhall evil dwell with thee.

' Thy juſtice is inflexible, thy truth inviola-
' ble, and the treaſures of thy goodneſs inex-
' hauſtible. Thou art righteous, O Lord, in
' all thy ways, and holy in all thy works. Thy
' righteouſneſs is as the great mountains : All
' thy ways are truth and judgment. Thou art
' God, and thy mercy endureth forever. Thy
' loving kindneſs is great towards us, and thy
' truth endureth to all generations. Thou haſt
' proclaimed thy name, the Lord, the Lord God,
' merciful and gracious, ſlow to anger, abundant
' in goodneſs and truth, keeping mercy for thou-
' ſands, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin.

' Theſe, O Lord, are but part of thy ways ;
' for who by ſearching can find out God ? who
' can find out the Almighty to perfection ?

' We praiſe thee as a God of ineffable glory.
' Thou haſt prepared thy throne in the heavens;
' and the Seraphim vail their faces before thee.
' Thou makeſt thine Angels ſpirits, and thy mi-
' niſters a flame of fire : Thouſand thouſands
' miniſter unto thee, and ten thouſand times ten

' thouſand

' thouſand ſtand before thee. Thou art worthy,
' O Lord, to receive bleſſing and honor and glo-
' ry and power; for thou haſt created all things,
' and for thy pleaſure, they are and were crea-
' ted. The earth is full of thy riches: thy
' kingdom ruleth over all: a ſparrow falls not
' to the ground without our father; and the
' hairs of our head are all numbered.

' Thou madeſt man at firſt of the duſt of the
' ground, and didſt breathe into him the breath
' of life, and he became a living ſoul. Thou
' haſt made, of one blood, all the nations of men,
' for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and
' haſt determined the times before appointed,
' and the bounds of their habitation.

' We adore thee, as the one, living, and true
' God, the Father, the Word, and the holy
' Ghoſt. We give honor to the Son as to the
' Father; and to the comforter the holy Spirit,
' who is ſent to teach us all things, and to bring
' all things to our remembrance. We praiſe
' thee, O Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, the Cre-
' ator, the Redeemer, and the Sanctifier. Thou haſt
' made us, and not we ourſelves; and therefore
' we are not our own but thine, thy people,
' and the ſheep of thy paſture. In thee we live,
' and move, and have our being. Thou haſt re-
' deemed us from evil. We are bought with a
' price. It is of thy mercy that we are not con-
' ſumed, even becauſe thy compaſſions fail not.
' Thou haſt appointed us a high prieſt, in whoſe
' name we may come boldly to the throne of
' grace. We make mention of the righteouſ-
' neſs of Chriſt, and of his only.

' Moſt merciful God, we come unto thee,
' in humble dependence upon his atonement
' and interceſſion, and confeſs our ſins, which

' are

' are many and great. Againſt thee, thee only
' have we ſinned, O God; and to us belongeth ſhame
' and confuſion of face. Behold we are vile,
' what ſhall we anſwer thee? We will lay our hand
' upon our mouth. Thou putteſt no truſt in
' thy ſaints; yea the heavens are not clean in thy
' ſight. How much more abominable and fil-
' thy is man, who drinketh iniquity like water?
' We have ruined ourſelves; but in thee is our
' help. If thou Lord ſhouldſt mark iniquities,
' O Lord, who ſhall ſtand? But there is for-
' giveneſs with thee that thou mayeſt be feared:
' with thee there is mercy; yea, with our God,
' there is plenteous redemption.

' O Lord, thou madeſt man upright, but he
' hath ſought out many inventions. Our firſt
' parents rebelled againſt thee; and we are tranſ-
' greſſors from the womb. We are a ſeed of
' evil doers. We have dealt very treacherouſly.
' By one man's diſobedience, many were made
' ſinners. By one man ſin entered into the
' world, and death by ſin; and ſo death paſſed
' upon all men, for that all have ſinned. Behold,
' we are ſhapen in iniquity. We are by nature
' children of wrath, even as others. All fleſh
' have corrupted their way; we are all gone a-
' ſide; we are altogether become filthy: there is
' none righteous; there is none that doth good;
' no not one.

' Our underſtandings are darkened by reaſon
' of ſin; our wills are ſtubborn and perverſe;
' and our affections are alienated from thee. We
' are wiſe to do evil, but to do good we have
' no knowledge. Our neck hath been an iron
' ſinew; and we have made our heart as the
' adamant. We have followed after vanities,

' and

and forſaken our mercies. We have ſet our affections on things beneath; and our hearts have departed from the living God. We are prone to evil as the ſparks fly upward. Our hearts are deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked. O Lord, we lament our irregular appetites, and inordinate paſſions. We bewail our pride, our carnality, and worldly mindedneſs. Our ſins are attended with exceedingly great aggravations. We have ſinned againſt the cleareſt light, the tendereſt love, and the moſt faithful warnings of God, of parents, of miniſters, and of our own conſciences. And now, O Lord, what ſhall we ſay, for we have forſaken thy commandments: we have ſinned, what ſhall we do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men?

'Glory, glory to thy name in the higheſt, that there is any hope for the loſt and ſinful children of men; that thou haſt entertained purpoſes of mercy towards any of the guilty race; that the joyful ſound of peace and reconciliation with God hath reached our ears. We thank thee, that thou haſt ſo loved the world as to give thine only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.

'In the all prevailing name of Jeſus of Nazareth, a name with which thou art ever well pleaſed, we preſent our prayers and ſupplications to thee. And now, Lord, what wait we for? Our eyes are unto thee, and our hope is in thee, through Chriſt Jeſus our Redeemer. Deliver us from all our tranſgreſſions; and, O God, be merciful to us ſinners. Waſh us thoroughly from our iniquity, and cleanſe us

' from our ſins : For we acknowledge our tranſ-
' greſſions ; and our ſin is ever before us. Juſ-
' tify us freely by thy grace, through the re-
' demption that is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.

' Create in us a clean heart, O God, and re-
' new a right ſpirit within us. Work in us the
' work of faith with power. Diſpoſe us to a
' godly ſorrow for our ſins, and give us repentance
' unto life. Shed abroad thy love in our hearts
' by the holy Ghoſt given unto us. Teach us
' thy ſtatutes, and give us underſtanding that we
' may know thy teſtimonies. May we know
' God and Jeſus Chriſt, whom to know is eter-
' nal life. Put thy fear, O Lord, into our
' hearts, that we may never depart from thy law.
' Hide pride from our eyes ; and cloath us with
' humility. Enable us to put on the ornament
' of a meek and quiet ſpirit. O God of peace,
' let not anger reſt in our boſoms. Fill us with
' charity and brotherly love, that we may keep
' the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace.
' May our conſciences be always tender. May we
' abſtain from all appearance of evil. Diſpoſe us
' to contentment with the allotments of thy pro-
' vidence ; and form us to ſubmiſſion and reſig-
' nation to thy will. May we ever poſſeſs our
' ſouls in patience, and feel an holy indifference
' to all the objects of time and ſenſe. O Lord, fur-
' niſh us with hope, which maketh not aſhamed ;
' that living hope which is, as an anchor to the
' ſoul, both ſure and ſtedfaſt.

' Enable us, O Lord, to be circumſpect in all
' our converſation, watching over our thoughts,
' our lips, and our lives. May the grace of
' God teach us, that denying ungodlineſs and
' worldly luſts, we may live ſoberly, righteouſ-
' ly

' ly and godly in this present world ; looking for
' that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing
' of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus
' Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might
' redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto
' himself a peculiar people, zealous of good
' works. Lord, quicken us in the ways of right-
' eousness. Let us ever practise the things which
' are honest in the sight of all men. May we
' be diligent in every duty, performing it with
' a ready mind, and with joy and gladness of
' heart. May we have grace always to live in
' the exercise of devotion and piety towards God;
' of truth, charity and righteousness towards
' men ; and to maintain chastity, temperance
' and sobriety towards ourselves. Grant that
' we may increase in all godliness ; that we
' may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of
' our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

' O Lord, who art the confidence of all the
' ends of the earth, preserve us from temptation;
' support us under afflictions ; comfort us in sor-
' rows ; make us useful in life, and prepare us
' for death : And when we have done serving
' thee here below, admit us, we beseech thee, to
' that state of rest and perfection, which thou
' hast reserved for thy people in the heavenly
' world.

' And now, O Lord our God, we desire to
' lift up our hearts to thee, in a grateful ac-
' knowledgment of all thy mercies and benefits
' to us. We praise thee, as the King of Kings,
' and Lord of Lords, full of compassion and
' goodness to the children of men. We thank
' thee, that thou hast formed us reasonable crea-
' tures, capable of knowing, serving, and enjoy-

' ing

' ing thee. We bleſs thee for thy preſerving
' care ; for our lives, our health, our food and
' raiment ; for our friends, our comforts, and all
' our temporal enjoyments. Above all we praiſe
' thee, O moſt merciful Father, for ſpiritual bleſ-
' ſings in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus.

' We thank thee, O Lord, for the early intima-
' tions of good will to fallen man; that the ſeed of
' the woman ſhould bruiſe the ſerpent's head.
' We adore thee for the wonderful and myſterious
' incarnation of thine only begotten Son. We
' praiſe thee, that when the fulneſs of time was
' come, thou didſt ſend forth thy Son made of a
' woman, made under the law, to redeem them
' that were under the law, that we might receive
' the adoption of ſons. We thank thee for his
' gracious undertaking ; for his exemplary life ;
' his ſoul ſaving doctrines ; for the ſtupen-
' dous miracles whereby he confirmed his divine
' miſſion ; and, in a ſpecial manner, for his me-
' ritorious death and ſufferings. We bleſs thee
' that he was delivered for our offences, and roſe
' again for our juſtification ; that he hath aſ-
' cended to his father and our father, to his God
' and our God ; and that he ever liveth to make
' interceſſion for us.

' We thank thee, O Lord God of grace, for
' the holy Spirit, and for his ſanctifying and com-
' forting influences upon the ſouls of men ; for
' the covenant of grace and all the precious pro-
' miſes thereof ; for thy Word ; for the goſpel
' miniſtry, and the inſtitution of all thine ordinan-
' ces ; for Sabbaths ; and for ſanctuary bleſſings.
' We praiſe thee for the ſtrivings of thy Spirit,
' and for the remonſtrances and admonitions of
' our conſciences ; for enlightening, renewing,

' juſtifying,

' juſtifying, adopting and ſanctifying grace ; for
' ſweet communion with thee in thine ordinan-
' ces ; for gracious anſwers to our prayers ;
' for ſuccour in temptations ; for ſupport un-
' der troubles ; and for the joyful hopes of a
' glorious immortality.

' Now, O thou moſt High, when we pray unto
' thee, we would remember and make ſupplica-
' tion for all the children of men. Extend, we
' beſeech thee, thy mercy to a guilty world ;
' and let all the ends of the earth ſee the ſalva-
' tion of our God. Let thy goſpel be preached
' unto every creature ; and add, unto thy church
' daily, ſuch as ſhall be ſaved. Give unto thy
' Son the Heathen for his inheritance, and the ut-
' termoſt parts of the earth for his poſſeſſion. O
' Lord, gather, into the goſpel Church, thine
' ancient people the Jews ; haſten the latter day
' glory; accompliſh all the purpoſes of thy grace;
' remove every thing which is a let or hin-
' drance to the advancement of the Redeemer's
' kingdom ; take away all error and idolatry,
' Antichriſtian ſuperſtition, and Mahometan
' deluſion.

' We pray for thy bleſſing upon thy Church
' univerſal, and upon every branch of it in par-
' ticular. O Lord, pity any part of thy Church
' which may be ſuffering affliction or perſecu-
' tion. Let not the rod of the wicked reſt upon
' the lot of the righteous ; ſtrengthen the faith
' and patience of thy ſuffering ſaints, that they
' may hope and quietly wait for the ſalvation of
' the Lord. Pour out thy Spirit upon all thy
' Churches ; revive thy work in the midſt of the
' years ; cauſe pure and undefiled religon uni-
' verſally to prevail ; ariſe, have mercy upon

' Zion,

' Zion, and let the time to favour her, yea, the
' ſet time, come.

' Heavenly Father, do thou bleſs all the Mi-
' niſters of thy Goſpel ; purify the ſons of Levi,
' and make thoſe holy who bear the veſſels of the
' Lord ; make them burning and ſhining lights
' in thy golden candleſticks ; and may they turn
' many to righteouſneſs, and ſhine as ſtars in the
' firmament of glory forever and ever.

' O Lord, we pray for thy ſpecial favour to
' thy Churches in this land. Be very gracious
' to all the Congregations and Miniſters of this
' Church. Bleſs our Preſbyteries, our Synods,
' and our General Council. May their deliberations
' at all times have a happy tendency to promote true
' religion, and to advance, more and more, the
' intereſt of the Redeemer's kingdom. Make
' all our people holy in their lives, and godly in
' their converſation. May they be an ornament
' to their profeſſion ; and may our Church be
' a praiſe in the land.

' O thou, who art King among the nations,
' viſit all the nations and kingdoms of the earth
' with thy goodneſs, thy mercy, and thy ſal-
' vation.

' Deal favorably, O Lord, with the land in
' which we live. O the hope of Iſrael, the Sa-
' viour thereof in time of trouble, be not as a
' ſtranger in our land, and as a way-faring man,
' that turneth aſide to tarry for a night. Make
' this Emmanuel's land. May it be a valley of
' viſion, a land wherein truth, peace and right-
' eouſneſs ſhall always dwell.

' Give, O Lord, we intreat thee, proſperity
' to the Inhabitants of this country, in their huſ-
' bandry, their trades and their merchandize.
' Make not our heaven braſs, nor our earth iron ;

' but

' but grant us, we pray thee, rain in due ſeaſon ;
' and reſerve unto us the appointed weeks of
' harveſt. Let our land yield her increaſe, and
' our trees their fruit. Abundantly bleſs our
' proviſion, and ſatisfy our poor with bread.

' O Lord, bleſs all in authority over us, ſu-
' preme and ſubordinate. Counſel our Counſel-
' lors, and teach our Senators wiſdom. Make
' our Officers peace, and our Exactors righteouſ-
' neſs. [It is proper, that ſpecial petitions be
' here offered up ; for the Congreſs of the Uni-
' ted States ; for the particular States, their Go-
' vernors and other Rulers ; for the State, in
' which the Congregation may be, its Govern-
' or, Legiſlature, and other Rulers, Judges and
' Magiſtrates ; as well as for the whole body of
' the people.] May all our Magiſtrates and Ru-
' lers rule in the fear of God ; be able men,
' men of truth, fearing God, and hating covet-
' ouſneſs. May judgment run down as waters,
' and righteouſneſs as a mighty ſtream.

' O Lord, we pray for all Schools, Colleges,
' and other Seminaries of learning. From theſe
' fountains may ſtreams iſſue, which ſhall make
' glad the city of our God. Bleſs all Teachers in
' them ; and may the youth be trained up in
' the fear of the Lord.

' Moſt gracious God, we beſeech thee to ex-
' tend compaſſion to the ſons and daughters of
' affliction. Heal the ſick ; eaſe the pained ;
' ſupport the diſtreſſed ; ſuccour the tempted ;
' comfort mourners ; reſtore, to their right mind,
' thoſe who are deprived of the uſe of their rea-
' ſon : be the God of the widow, the father of
' the fatherleſs, and the orphan's ſtay. [It is
' proper here, if any have deſired the prayers
' of the Church, that ſpecial petitions be offered
' up for them.] ' And

'And now, O Lord our God, we commit 'ourselves unto thee; we hope in thy mercies; 'and we wait for thy salvation. Pardon the iniquity of our holy things. We ask and offer 'all, in the name of our once crucified but now 'exalted Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ; to 'whom, with the Father, and the Spirit of all 'grace, be ascribed glory, honor, dominion and 'praise, for ever and ever. *Amen.*'

We judge this to be a convenient order in the the public prayers of the Church; yet the Minister, as in prudence he shall think meet, is to alter and change this order; to leave out any petitions or parts of it; to add to or vary it, according to the numerous patterns of prayer in the Scriptures.

We recommend it to all Ministers ordinarily to use scriptural language in their public prayers, and that they be careful not to be tedious in this part of the service. We think that the prayer before sermon ought not usually to be shorter than twelve, nor longer than eighteen or twenty minutes.

As the prayer, which Christ taught his disciples, is both a pattern for prayer, and itself a most comprehensive prayer, we recommend it to be used in the prayers of the Church: and we think the most proper place for this purpose is, either at the conclusion of the introductory prayer, or at the end of this prayer.

Let a Psalm be also sung here, before the minister proceed to his Sermon.

Of the preaching of the Word.

The Preaching of the Word, being an institution of God for the salvation of men, should be so performed, that the workman need not be a-

shamed,

ſhamed, but may ſave himſelf and thoſe that hear him.

Every man, who undertakes this ſacred Work, ſhould be careful that he be called of God, and regularly called and introduced by the Church, according to the order of the Scriptures.

The ſubject of his Sermon is to be ſome verſe or verſes of ſcripture, holding forth ſome principle of religion, inculcating ſome duty, or reproving ſome ſin. Let him not uſe a text merely as a motto, but be careful that the doctrine propoſed be fairly contained in it. It is proper alſo, that large portions of Scripture be ſometimes expounded, and particularly improved, for the inſtruction of the People in the meaning and uſe of the ſacred Oracles.

Let the introduction of his diſcourſe be brief and perſpicuous, and ordinarily drawn from the text or context; that, by a natural and eaſy tranſition, it may lead him to the ſubject, which he intends to conſider. Let not the diviſions be too numerous. Let the doctrines be plain, the explications eaſy, the illuſtrations clear, the arguments convincing, the inferences natural; and the application ſolemn, affectionate, powerful and perſuaſive.

This method of preaching requires much ſtudy, meditation and prayer. Miniſters ought, in general, to write their ſermons, and not to indulge themſelves in looſe extempore harangues, but to carry beaten oil into the ſanctuary of the Lord. They ought ſo to digeſt their ſermons, and commit them to memory, as not, ordinarily, to uſe

their

their notes in public. But if any chooſe to have their notes before them, let them uſe them with the glance of the eye, but not read their ſermons from the pulpit.

The ſervant of Chriſt is to prepare for the ſanctuary, and to conduct the ſervices thereof, in ſuch a manner, that his hearers may be edified; and may feel the word of God to be quick and powerful, and a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Whatever the peculiarities of a Miniſter's method may be, he is to perform his whole miniſtry;

I. Faithfully, having a ſingle eye to the honor of Chriſt, and ſincerely ſeeking the ſalvation of the people.

II. Painfully; not doing the work of the Lord negligently.

III. Plainly; that the feebleſt mind may underſtand; delivering the truth, not in the enticing words of man's wiſdom, but in demonſtration of the Spirit and of power.

IV. Wiſely; adapting all his doctrines, exhortations and reproofs, in ſuch a manner as may be moſt likely to be ſucceſsful; neither neglecting the meaneſt, nor ſparing the greateſt in their ſins.

V. Gravely and decently, as becometh the Oracles of God; avoiding all ſuch improper geſtures and phraſes as may cauſe ſenſible men to deſpiſe him and his miniſtry.

VI. With meekneſs and tender affection; that the people may ſee the whole of his miniſtrations proceed from love, holy zeal, and a hearty deſire to do them good.

VII. As taught of God, and fully perſuaded in his own mind, that what he delivers is the truth

truth of Christ; expressing himself in language agreeable to Scripture, avoiding terms of art, and the phrases of Philosophers. He is also to live the doctrine which he teaches, being an example to the flock, in humility, circumspection and godly conversation; that he may have comfort in this life, many seals to his ministry, and, when he has finished his labours of love, a crown of glory in the world to come.

VIII. As one primary design, of the public ordinances of the Sabbath, is, to pay acts of social homage to the most high God, the Minister is to be careful not to make his sermons too long, so as to interfere therewith. He is particularly to guard against shortening the devotional, and more important parts of the service, to make way for long discourses. But, when there is only one public service in the day, as is the case, in the winter, in many of our country Churches, the sermon, with all the other parts, may be somewhat longer, than where there are two or more services. And, when there are two or more public services, statedly every Lord's day, we think the sermons, in general, ought not to be shorter than thirty, nor longer than forty or forty-five minutes.

Of Prayer after Sermon.

The sermon being ended, the Minister is to pray, turning some of the principal parts of his sermon into confession, humiliation, petition, thanksgiving and praise, as the nature of the subject may direct. In a special manner he is,

'To give thanks, for the great love of God 'in sending his only begotten Son to be the Sa-'viour of the world; for the communications of

'the

'the Holy Ghoſt; for the light, liberty, privi-
'leges and rich bleſſings of the goſpel; for e-
'lecting love, redeeming mercy, ſanctifying
'grace, and the joyful hopes of glory.

'To pray for the continuance of the goſpel,
'with all its ordinances, in their purity, ſpiritu-
'ality and power; for a bleſſing to accompany
'the word of his grace, with which they have
'been now favoured; for preparation for death
'and judgment; for the forgiveneſs of the ini-
'quities of our moſt holy ſervices; and for the
'acceptance of our perſons and offerings, through
'the merits and mediation of our great High
'Prieſt and Saviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.'

After this prayer, let a pſalm be ſung. Then let there be a collection for the poor, or other uſes of the Church; and let every one lay by, upon the firſt day of the week, as God hath proſpered him, agreeably to the Apoſtolic direction. Then let the Miniſter diſmiſs the Congregation with a ſolemn bleſſing, to the following or like purport:

'The grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the
'love of God, and the communion of the holy
'Ghoſt, be with you all. *Amen.*'

Of the Adminiſtration of Baptiſm.

Baptiſm is not to be unneceſſarily delayed, nor to be adminiſtred, in any caſe, by any private perſon; but by a Miniſter of Chriſt, called to be the Steward of the myſteries of God.

It is uſually to be adminiſtred in the Church, in the preſence of the Congregation; and it is convenient that it be performed immediately after ſermon.

After

After previous notice is given to the Miniſter, the child to be baptized is to be preſented, by one or both the parents, ſignifying their deſire that the child may be baptized.

Before baptiſm, the Miniſter may, occaſionally, uſe ſome words of inſtruction, reſpecting the inſtitution, nature, uſe and ends of this ordinance: Shewing;

'That it is inſtituted by Chriſt; that it is a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith; that the ſeed of the faithful have no leſs a right to this 'ordinance, under the goſpel, than the ſeed of 'Abraham to circumciſion, under the Old Teſ-'tament; that Chriſt commanded all nations 'to be baptized; that he bleſſed little children, 'declaring that of ſuch is the kingdom of hea-'ven; that children are federally holy, and 'therefore ought to be baptized; that we are, 'by nature, ſinful, guilty and polluted, and have 'need of cleanſing by the blood of Chriſt, and 'by the ſanctifying influences of the Spirit of 'God.'

The Miniſter is alſo to exhort the parents to the careful performance of their duty: requiring;

'That they teach the child to read the word 'of God; that they inſtruct it in the principles 'of our holy religion, as contained in the Scrip-'tures of the old and new Teſtament, and ex-'cellently ſummed up in the Confeſſion and Ca-'techiſm of this Church; that they pray with and 'for it; that they ſet an example of piety and 'godlineſs before it; and endeavour, by all the 'means of God's appointment, to bring up their 'child in the nurture and admonition of the 'Lord.'

Then

Then the Miniſter is to pray for a bleſſing to attend this ordinance, in the following or like manner:

'Moſt merciful, holy, and eternal God, we 'pray for thy bleſſing upon theſe parents and 'their child. The ſouls of parents and the 'ſouls of children are thine. Enable theſe pa- 'rents, in faith and love, to offer up their child 'to thee, at this time, in this holy ordinance of 'baptiſm. Sanctify this child by thy grace. 'May its original guilt be done away, through 'the blood of the Lamb, that was ſlain. Waſh 'this child in the laver of regeneration. In- 'graft it into Chriſt; and make it an heir of 'glory. Join the inward baptiſm of the Spirit 'with the outward baptiſm of water. Graciouſ- 'ly bleſs and ſanctify this holy ordinance to the 'ſpiritual benefit of this child. Ratify in hea- 'ven what we now do upon earth. Hear us, 'O our God, accept and anſwer us, only for 'the ſake of our divine Redeemer. *Amen.*'

Then the Miniſter, either taking the Child in his arms, or leaving it in the arms of the parent, ſhall call the child by its name, and ſay;

'I baptize thee, in the name of the Father, 'and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.'

As he pronounces theſe words, he is to baptize the Child with water, by pouring or ſprinkling it on the face of the Child, without adding any other ceremony.

This being performed he ſhall pray to this or the like purpoſe:

'O thou moſt glorious, condeſcending, and 'gracious God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; 'we give thee hearty thanks, for the covenant of 'grace, and for all the inſtitutions of thy mercy.

'Follow

'Follow with thy bleſſing this holy ordinance
'of baptiſm, which has now been adminſtred in
'thy name. O Lord, enable theſe parents to
'live in the faithful diſcharge of every chriſtian
'duty, towards this Child. Receive it into thy
'fatherly care and protection. May it live and
'grow up before thee, and do worthily in its
'day and generation. Sanctify it by thy Spirit;
'uphold it by thy power. May it be a uſeful
'member of thy Church here; and be kept, by
'faith, unto ſalvation, through Jeſus Chriſt our
'Lord. *Amen.*'

This will form a part of the concluding prayer of public worſhip.

It is proper, that baptiſm be adminiſtred in the preſence of the Congregation: yet there may be caſes, when it will be expedient to adminiſter this ordinance in private houſes; of which the Miniſter is to be the Judge.

Of the Adminiſtration of the Lord's Supper.

The Communion, or Supper of the Lord, is to be celebrated frequently; but how often may be determined by the Miniſter and Elderſhip of each Congregation, as they may judge moſt for edification: but, we think it ought to be adminiſtered, at leaſt, once in every quarter of the year. The time for the celebration of this ordinance, we judge convenient after the morning ſermon: But if any chooſe to celebrate it in the afternoon, they are at their liberty.

The ignorant and ſcandalous are not to be admitted to the Lord's ſupper.

It is proper that public notice ſhould be given to the Congregation, at leaſt, the ſabbath before the adminiſtration of this ordinance, and that, on

ſome

some day of the week, something be taught concerning its nature, and a due preparation for it, that all may come in a suitable manner to this holy feast.

When the sermon is ended, the Minister shall shew;

'That this is an ordinance of Christ, by reading 'the words of institution, either from one of the 'Evangelists, or from 1 Cor. XI *chapter*, which, 'as to him may appear expedient, he may ex-'plain and apply; that it is to be observed in 'remembrance of Christ, to shew forth his death 'till he come; that it is of inestimable benefit, 'to strengthen his people against sin; to sup-'port them under troubles; to encourage and 'quicken them in duty; to inspire them with 'love and zeal; to increase their faith, and ho-'ly resolution, and to beget peace of conscience, 'and comfortable hopes of glory.'

He is to warn the profane, the ignorant, and scandalous, and those that secretly indulge themselves in any known sin, not to approach the holy Table.

On the other hand, he shall invite to this holy Table, such as, sensible of their lost and helpless state by sin, depend upon the atonement of Christ for pardon and acceptance with God; such as, being instructed in the Gospel doctrine, have a competent knowledge to discern the Lord's body; and such as desire to forsake the ways of sin, and are determined to lead a life of practical godliness.

The table, on which the elements are placed, being decently covered, the bread in convenient dishes, and the wine in large cups; and the Communicants orderly and gravely sitting around it,

(or

(or in their seats before the table) in the presence of the Minister: Let him take a portion of the bread in one hand, and one of the cups in the other; and then pray for a blessing, to this or the like effect:

'O thou eternal God, Father, Son, and holy 'Spirit; We adore thee as the fountain of be- 'ing and blessedness. We praise thee, that 'thou hast erected a Church in this fallen world; 'that we are called to be members of it; and 'that thou hast appointed various ordinances to 'be observed therein.

'Now, O Lord, we are invited to come and 'eat of Wisdom's bread, and to drink of the 'wine that she hath mingled. Cause us so to 'hunger and thirst after righteousness, that we 'may be filled. Draw us, and we will run after 'thee. Bring us into thy chambers, that we 'may be glad and rejoice in thee, and remem- 'ber thy love more than wine.

'Most gracious God, we give thee glory for 'all the purposes of thy love; for the mission, 'sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, in whose 'name alone we have access to the throne of 'thy grace, and hope for everlasting life. We 'thank thee for this holy ordinance. We de- 'voutly pray for thy divine blessing upon us, 'in our attendance upon this feast of love.

'Bless, O Lord, these elements of bread and 'wine. May we receive them as the Symbols 'of the broken body, and shed blood, of our 'Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May we, by 'faith, eat the flesh, and drink the blood, of the 'Son of God. O let this cup of blessing, which 'we bless, be to us the communion of the blood of 'Christ; let this bread, which we break, be to us 'the communion of the body of Christ.

'Moſt merciful Father, keep our hearts and 'minds in the whole of this duty; and pre-'ſerve us from the ſuggeſtions of the evil one. 'May our ſouls feel the lively exerciſes of every 'grace. Suit thy mercy to our various circum-'ſtances. May we be joined to the Lord in a 'new and everlaſting covenant, and made one 'ſpirit with him. May thy continual grace 'and aid further, and aſſiſt us, in the perform-'ance of every duty of the Chriſtian life. Seal 'unto us, we beſeech thee, the remiſſion of all our 'ſins, the gift of the Holy Ghoſt, and the pro-'miſe of eternal life.

'Now unto him who is able to keep us 'from falling, and to preſent us faultleſs before 'the preſence of his glory with exceeding joy, 'to the only wiſe God our Saviour be glory 'and majeſty, dominion and power, both now 'and ever. *Amen.*'

The elements being now ſet apart by prayer, the Miniſter is to take the bread, and break it, into ſmall portions, in the view of the people. While he is performing this ſacramental action, let him make ſuch obſervations, upon the body of Chriſt Jeſus, which was broken for us, as to him may appear proper.

Then he is to ſay in expreſſions of this ſort:

'Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, on the ſame night 'in which he was betrayed, having taken bread, 'and bleſſed and broken it, gave it to his Diſci-'ples; as I, miniſtring in his name, give this 'bread unto you; ſaying, [here the Bread is 'to be diſtributed] Take, eat; this is my Body, 'which is broken for you: this do in remem-'brance of me.'

After having given the Bread, he ſhall take the Cup, and ſay: 'After

'After the same manner, our Saviour also 'took the Cup, and, having given thanks, as 'hath been done in his name, he gave it to the 'Disciples; saying, [while the Minister is re-'peating these words let him give the Cup] This 'Cup is the New Testament in my blood, which 'is shed for many, for the remission of sins: Drink 'ye all of it.'

The Minister himself is to communicate, at such time as may appear to him most convenient.

The Minister may, in a few words, put the Communicants in mind;

'Of the grace of God, in Jesus Christ, held 'forth in this sacrament, and of their obligation 'to be the Lord's; and may exhort them, to 'walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are 'called; and, as they have professedly received 'Christ Jesus the Lord, that they be care-'ful so to walk in him; and to maintain good 'works.'

It may not be improper for the Minister to give a word of exhortation also to those who have been only spectators, reminding them;

'Of their duty; stating their sin and danger, 'by living in disobedience to Christ, in neglect-'ing this holy ordinance; and calling upon them 'to be earnest in making preparation for at-'tending upon it, at the next time of its cele-'bration.'

Then the Minister is to pray and give thanks to God;

'For his rich mercy, and invaluable good-'ness, vouchsafed to them in that sacred com-'munion; to implore pardon for the defects 'of the whole service; and to pray for the ac-'ceptance of their persons and performances;

'for

'for the gracious aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit, 'to enable them, as they have received Chriſt 'Jeſus the Lord, ſo to walk in him; that they 'may hold faſt that they have received, that no 'man take their crown; that their converſa-'tion may be as becometh the goſpel; that they 'may bear about with them, continually, the 'dying of the Lord Jeſus; that the life alſo of 'Jeſus may be manifeſted in their mortal body; 'that their light may ſo ſhine before men, that 'others, ſeeing their good works, may glorify 'their Father who is in heaven.'

The collection, for the poor, and to defray the expence of the elements, may be made after this, or at ſuch other time as may ſeem meet to the Elderſhip.

Now let a pſalm or hymn be ſung, and the Congregation diſmiſſed with the following or ſome other goſpel benediction;

'Now the God of peace, that brought again 'from the dead our Lord Jeſus, that great ſhep-'herd of the ſheep, through the blood of the 'everlaſting covenant, make you perfect in every 'good work to do his will, working in you that 'which is well pleaſing in his ſight, through Je-'ſus Chriſt; to whom be glory forever and ever. 'Amen.'

It has been cuſtomary, in ſome parts of our Church, to obſerve a Faſt before the Lord's Supper; to have Sermon on Saturday and Monday; and to aſſemble two or three Miniſters, with their Congregations, on ſuch occaſions. Whereas theſe ſeaſons have been bleſſed to many ſouls, and may tend to keep up a ſtricter union of Miniſters and Congregations; we think it not improper, that they, who chuſe to continue

nue in this practice, should dispense the Sacrament, in this way, once a year: but we judge it highly expedient and necessary, that each Congregation celebrate the Communion, as before directed, at least once in each quarter of the year.

Of the Admission of Persons to Sealing-Ordinances.

Children, born within the pale of the visible Church, and dedicated to God in baptism, are Christians. They are under the inspection and government of the Church-Session; and are to be taught to read, and repeat the Catechism, the Apostles Creed, and the Lord's prayer. They are to be taught to pray, to abhor sin, to fear God, and to obey the Lord Jesus Christ: And, when they come to years of discretion, if they be free from scandal, appear sober and steady, and to have sufficient knowledge to discern the Lord's body, they ought to be informed, it is their duty, and their privilege, to come to the Lord's Supper.

The years of discretion, in young Christians, cannot be precisely fixed. This must be left to the prudence of the Eldership. The Officers of the Church are the sole Judges of the qualifications of those to be admitted to Sealing-Ordinances; and of the time when it is proper to admit young Christians to them.

Those, who are to be admitted to Sealing-Ordinances, shall be examined, as to their knowledge and belief of the following things: viz.

'That the Scriptures, of the Old and New 'Testament, are the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice; that these 'contain, plainly and sufficiently, every doc-

'trine

'trine needful for salvation ; that there is one, 'only, living, and true, God, possessed of every 'perfection and excellency, the Creator, the 'Preserver, and the Governor of the universe ; 'that there are three Persons in the Godhead, 'the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and 'that these three are one ; that all men are in a 'lost estate, and, as sinners, stand justly condemn-'ed by the law of God, and are liable to his 'wrath and curse ; that Jesus Christ, the on-'ly begotten Son of God, who is God and 'man in one person, came into this world, to 'seek and to save them that are lost ; that he 'suffered, and made atonement, in their room 'and stead ; that he died for their offences, and 'rose again for their justification ; that he sit-'teth at the right hand of God in heaven, ma-'king continual intercession for them ; that the 'enlightening and sanctifying influences of the 'Holy Ghost are absolutely necessary, to lead 'us into the saving understanding of the sacred 'Scriptures, to renew the heart, and to enable 'a Christian to live Godlily in the world ; and 'that watchfulness over the life, holy meditation, 'a conscientious attendance upon public, pri-'vate, and secret worship ; together with the 'steady practice of righteousness, truth, sincer-'ty, and charity, towards men ; and of sobriety, 'chastity, and temperance, towards ourselves ; 'are the indispensible duties of every Christian.'

When the knowledge, of those who are to be admitted to sealing-ordinances, is judged to be satisfactory ; and nothing appears in their life and conversation to hinder their admission ; the Minister shall, either in private, or in the

presence

preſence of the Seſſion, or in the preſence of the Congregation, as ſhall be moſt expedient, aſk the profeſſion of their faith, in the following or like manner :

' Do you believe Jeſus Chriſt to be the Son of ' God ? Do you aſſent to the Covenant of grace, ' and acknowledge the obligation of your bap- ' tiſmal engagements ? Do you take God, the ' Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, to be your God? ' Do you renounce your former ſins? And do you ' promiſe, through grace, to live in the diligent ' practice of all the duties required in the ' Goſpel ?'

It is not improper that this be accompanied with ſuitable exhortation and prayer. And the perſons, ſo profeſſing their Faith, are, immediately thereupon, entitled to ſealing-ordinances.

Unbaptized perſons are not members of the viſible Church ; they are not Chriſtians : Therefore, when they offer themſelves, they are to be conſidered as candidates for admiſſion into the Church, and to be taught the doctrines of the Goſpel as above directed.

When their knowledge ſhall be deemed ſatisfactory, and nothing appears in their life againſt their admiſſion, it is moſt expedient, in ordinary caſes, that they ſhould publicly profeſs their Faith, in the preſence of the Congregation ; [in the ſame, or like manner, as directed above in the admiſſion of young Chriſtians to Sealing-Ordinances:] After which they ought to be immediately baptized, and admitted to all the privileges of the Church.

Of the mode of inflicting Church-Cenſures.

The power, which Chriſt hath given the Rulers of his Church, is for edification, and not for deſtruction. As, in the preaching of the Word, the wicked are, miniſterially and doctrinally, ſeparated from the good; ſo, by diſcipline, the Church authoritatively makes a diſtinction between the holy and the profane. In this ſhe acts the part of a tender Mother, correcting her Children only for their good: And that every one of them may be preſented faultleſs, in the day of the Lord Jeſus.

When any perſon, belonging to the Congregation, is reported of, as being guilty of a ſcandalous and cenſurable offence; the Church-Seſſion ſhall conſider it as their duty, to enquire into the matter; to call the perſon before them, and to deal with him, according to the rules of the Church.

When any member ſhall have been guilty of a fault, deſerving cenſure, the Judicatory ſhall proceed with all tenderneſs, and reſtore their offending brother in the ſpirit of meekneſs; conſidering themſelves, leſt they alſo be tempted. Cenſure ought to be inflicted with the greateſt poſſible ſolemnity; that it may be the means of impreſſing the mind of the delinquent with a proper ſenſe of his danger, while he ſtands excluded from the privileges of the Church of the living God: and that, with the divine bleſſing, it may lead him to repentance; and earneſtly to deſire to be reconciled to the Lord whom he hath offended, and to his Church, which he hath, by his ſin, ſcandalized and grieved.

When

When any perſon ſhall voluntarily confeſs himſelf guilty of an offence; and the offence be of a ſmaller nature; and He ſhall appear penitent, the Judicatory may give him an admonition, to be more watchful for the future, without proceeding to ſuſpend or exclude him from privileges.

When the Judicatory has reſolved to paſs ſentence, ſuſpending a member from Church-privileges, the Moderator ſhall addreſs him, to the following or like purpoſe:

'Whereas you are guilty [by your own confeſſion, or convicted by ſufficient proof as the caſe may be] of the ſin of [here mention the particular offence] we declare you ſuſpended from the privileges of the Church; till you give ſatisfactory evidence of the ſincerity of your repentance.'

We now ſolemnly rebuke you for your ſin: Conſider, that this is one of thoſe works of the fleſh, which exclude from the kingdom of Heaven. You muſt have been far left of God, thus to crucify afreſh the Son of God, and put him to open ſhame. Seriouſly reflect, that the wrath of God is revealed, from Heaven, againſt all unrighteouſneſs; and that you ſhall have his wrath poured out upon you to the uttermoſt; unleſs you repent. Out of Chriſt, there is no ſafety: for our God is a conſuming fire. But, while faithfulneſs to your ſoul obliges us to warn you of your danger, we call upon you to repent; to turn unto the Lord, who will have mercy upon you; and to our God, who will abundantly pardon. O be perſuaded to flee to the blood of ſprinkling. Apply anew to Chriſt Jeſus the Lord: for he is able to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.

Then let the Minister pray, in the following or like manner:

'O Lord, do thou, who hast given authority to thy servants to bind and to loose upon earth, bless thine own ordinance. May this person be recovered from the snare of the Destroyer. None are able to pluck the people of Christ out of his hand. Do thou, O compassionate Redeemer, who didst pray for Peter, in the hour of temptation, that his Faith might not fail, and who didst restore him after he had fallen, grant repentance unto this Offender. May his heart be filled with godly sorrow, which worketh repentance not to be repented of. O Lord, deal not with him, according to the demerit of his sin; but do thou magnify thy grace, by the forgiveness of all his iniquities. Bless thy Church, O thou King of Saints, and preserve thy servants from such heinous offences. Let the time to favour Zion come, when the people shall be subdued under the anointed of the Lord. Enable us, O Lord, to watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation. Let not the Adversary triumph over thy chosen. Hear us, most gracious God, for the sake of Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and man. *Amen.*'

It is most expedient, that all this should pass only before the Judicatory. But, if any Church think it most expedient to rebuke the Offender publicly, this solemn exclusion, from the privileges of the Church, may be in the presence of the Congregation.

After a person has been excluded from Church privileges, it is not fit, that he be given over as lost. The Minister, and Elders, and other Christians,

tians, ſhould take occaſion to converſe with him; as well as pray frequently in private, that it would pleaſe God to give him repentance. And it may not be improper, at times, particularly on days preparatory to the diſpenſing of the Lord's Supper, that the prayers of the Church be offered up, for thoſe unhappy perſons, who by their wickedneſs, have ſhut themſelves out from this holy communion.

When the Judicatory ſhall be ſatisfied, as to the reality of the repentance of any Offender, he ſhall, on his earneſt importunity, be admitted to profeſs his repentance; and be reſtored to the privileges of the Church.

It is moſt proper, that Penitents, appointed by the Seſſion to be reſtored to Church-privileges, ſhould be reconciled in the preſence of the Congregation: [yet this is not ſo indiſpenſible, but that a Judicatory may, on good grounds, do it by themſelves] and it ſhall be done in the following or like manner:

The Miniſter, having called the Penitent, in the preſence of the Congregation, ſhall ſay:

'Do you now profeſs your repentance for 'your ſin; your ſincere deſire to be reſtored to 'the privileges of the Church; and your pur-'poſe, through the aſſiſtance of the grace of 'God, to live as it becometh the Goſpel?'

Upon his anſwering in the affirmative, the Miniſter ſhall addreſs him thus:

Dear Brother, it gives us ſincere pleaſure to be allowed to entertain a hope, that you have ſeen your folly, your ſin, and your danger, and have been led to flee for refuge to the only hope ſet before us in the Goſpel. Permit me to remind you, that you have now to do with the heart-

heart-searching God. It is easy to impose upon the Church; you may deceive man, but God cannot be deceived, and may not be mocked. Oh! that your heart may be right with him. If you, in this solemn manner, profess repentance, while you feel no true repentance, but are still drawn with the Cords of sin, be afraid: for the bands of mockers shall be made strong. But, Brother, we hope better things of you; and things which accompany salvation, though we thus speak. Suffer me to remind you, that much circumspection is necessary; and that a humble, holy walking with God is your special duty. You have grieved the people of God, and given occasion to the Adversary to blaspheme. I beseech you, endeavour, by your modest unaffected piety, to edify the one, and to stop the mouth of the other. Your late fall has, no doubt, convinced you of the great need you have of the grace and Spirit of God. Live in constant dependance thereon: and may you be enabled, for the future, to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

Then let the Minister pray to the following purpose:

'Most gracious God, thou art the Father of 'mercies; thou art the God of all grace, and 'of all consolation. Judgment is thy strange 'work. There is forgiveness with thee, that 'thou mayest be feared. With the Lord there 'is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. We desire, O God, to join with this 'person in confessing his iniquity. O may his 'sin be ever before him. May he be washed in 'the fountain opened for sin. Lord thou hast 'said, there is joy in heaven over one sinner that 'repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just 'persons,

' perſons, who need no repentance. O Lord,
' we beſeech thee to magnify thy grace by ſa-
' ving this precious ſoul. Do thou looſe in hea-
' ven, as we now, in thy name, looſe him on
' earth. O Lord, hide thy face from his ſins ;
' and blot out all his iniquities. Create in him
' a clean heart, O God ; and renew a right
' ſpirit within him. Reſtore unto him the joy of
' thy ſalvation ; and uphold him with thy free
' Spirit. Bleſs all thy Church. Keep us from
' falling. Sanctify us wholly in body and ſpirit :
' And may we all, at laſt, be preſented faultleſs,
' before the preſence of thy glory, with exceed-
' ing joy : for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt, for whom
' we thank thee ; and may, Bleſſing, and honour,
' and glory, and power, be unto him that ſitteth
' upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever
' and ever. *Amen.*'

Then the Miniſter ſhall ſay to the Penitent :

' By virtue of the authority which Chriſt hath
' left in the Church, for its edification, I pro-
' nounce you looſed from the ſentence of exclu-
' ſion, and received again to all the privileges
' of the Goſpel. Go and ſin no more, leſt a
' worſe thing befal you.'

When any perſon has been, with the advice of the Preſbytery, (as directed in the Form of government &c.) adjudged to be cut off from the communion of the Church, it is proper that the ſentence be pronounced againſt him ; even although, as is to be expected in ſuch caſes of contumacy and wickedneſs, he ſhould pretend to deſpiſe the cenſures of the Church, and either caſt off all profeſſion of religion, or go to another denomination. The deſign of excommunication is, both to operate upon the Offender as

the

the means of reclaiming him, and alſo to purge out the old leaven from the Church, that others may not be reproached for his vileneſs, or contaminated with his example.

The Miniſter ſhall, after the advice of the Preſbytery has been obtained, at leaſt two Lord's days before the excommunication, give the Congregation a ſhort narrative of the ſeveral ſteps which have been taken with their ſcandalous and obſtinate brother, and inform them, that it has been found neceſſary to reſolve to cut him off from their communion.

On the forenoon of the Lord's day appointed for the purpoſe, after all the other parts of worſhip are over, before pronouncing the bleſſing, the Miniſter ſhall denounce this awful ſentence, in the following or like manner:

He ſhall begin by ſhewing the authority of the Church to caſt out unworthy members, from Mat. XVIII. 15, 16, 17, 18; 1 Cor. V. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; and ſhall briefly explain the nature, uſe, and conſequences of this tremendous cenſure; warning the people, to avoid all unneceſſary intercourſe with him who is caſt out, and to let him be unto them as an Heathen man and a Publican.

Then he ſhall ſay: (for it is not to be expected the perſon will be preſent)

'Whereas A. B. hath been, by ſufficient 'proof, convicted of [here inſert the ſin,] and, 'after much admonition and prayer, obſtinately 'refuſeth to hear the Church, and hath manifeſted no evidence of repentance: Therefore, in 'the name and by the authority of the Lord Je'ſus Chriſt, I pronounce him ſhut out from the 'Church of God, and delivered unto Satan, that 'his ſpirit may be ſaved in the day of the Lord 'Jeſus.'

Then

Then the Minister shall pray, to the following purpose:

'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, thou 'art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, or 'to look upon sin. Evil shall not dwell with 'thee, nor fools stand in thy sight. O Lord, 'do thou bless this ordinance which thou hast 'instituted. As we have, by thy appointment, 'shut out this obstinate sinner from the Church 'of the living God; do thou bind in hea-'ven, whom we now, in thy name, bind upon 'earth. Let not thy Church or people be con-'taminated with this unworthy member, whom, 'as old leaven, we have now purged out. Let 'not his sins prove a reproach to our most holy 'profession. But, O most merciful God, thou 'seekest not the destruction of the sinner. Take 'not, we beseech thee, thy holy Spirit wholly 'from this unhappy Person. O cause him to 'feel the tremendous danger of being without 'God, and without hope in the world. Con-'vince him, by thy Spirit, of sin, of righteous-'ness, and of judgment. O Lord, from a deep 'sense of guilt, may he, in due time, be laid 'under the happy necessity, of seeking the 'peace of God and of his Church; that so he, 'who hath been bound with much grief and re-'luctance, may be loosed with the joy of all 'Saints. And, O Lord, may thy people, warn-'ed by this dreadful example, fear and do no 'more presumptuously. O Lord, hear, answer, 'and do, for the sake of Jesus Christ: and to 'thy name be ascribed glory, dominion, and 'praise, world without end. *Amen.*'

It may perhaps happen, that ſome, whom God hath given up to a ſeared conſcience and to hardneſs of heart, will affect to deſpiſe this ſentence, and to be highly offended with the Church. But in general excommunicated perſons, when they coolly reflect on their ſin, and remember that this is the ordinance of Chriſt, will it is hoped be wounded in their hearts and pricked in their reins. Like Cain, when God pronounced ſentence upon him for the murder of his brother, they will find their puniſhment greater than they are able to bear. Knowing themſelves to be an execration and a curſe in the earth, they will, for the moſt part, be deſirous of being delivered from this unhappy condition. As the Father ran to meet the prodigal ſon, when he was yet a great way off; ſo the Church ſhould cheriſh every ſymptom of humility and repentance.

When the Church-Seſſion ſhall have obtained ſatisfaction, as to the ſincerity of his penitence, and have conſulted the Preſbytery, the Miniſter ſhall, at leaſt two Lord's days before, inform the Congregation of the ſteps which have been taken with the excommunicated perſon; and that it is reſolved to reſtore him to Church-privileges.

On the day appointed for his abſolution, when all the other parts of divine ſervice are over, before pronouncing the bleſſing in the forenoon, the Miniſter ſhall call upon the excommunicated perſon, and propoſe to him, in the preſence of the Congregation, the following queſtions:

'Do you, from a deep ſenſe of your great 'wickedneſs, freely confeſs your ſin, obſtina-'cy and preſumption, in thus rebelling againſt 'God, and in refuſing to hear his Church;

'and

' and do you acknowledge that you have been,
' in juſtice and mercy, cut off from the commu-
' nion of the Saints ? Anſwer, I do. Do you
' now voluntarily profeſs your ſincere repent-
' ance, and deep contrition, for your ſin and ob-
' ſtinacy ; and do you humbly aſk the forgive-
' neſs of God and of his Church ? Anſwer, I
' do. Do you ſincerely promiſe, through di-
' vine grace, to live in all humbleneſs of mind
' and circumſpection ; and to endeavour to a-
' dorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, by
' having your converſation as becometh the Goſ-
' pel ? Anſwer I do.'

Here the Miniſter ſhall give the Penitent a ſuitable exhortation ; addreſſing him in the bowels of brotherly love, encouraging and comforting him. Then he ſhall pronounce the ſentence of abſolution, in the following words :

' Whereas you, A. B. for your ſin and obſti-
' nacy, have been ſhut out from the communion
' of the Faithful, but have now manifeſted ſuch
' repentance as ſatisfies the Church: In the name
' of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt and by his authority,
' I declare you abſolved, from the ſentence of ex-
' communication formerly denounced againſt
' you ; and I do, with pleaſure, receive you in-
' to the communion of the Church, that you
' may be a partaker of all the benefits of the
' Lord Jeſus to your eternal ſalvation.'

Here the Miniſter ſhall pray to the following effect :

' Almighty God, and moſt merciful Father,
' thou wilt not execute the fierceneſs of thine
' anger, thou wilt not return to deſtroy ; for thou
' art God, and not man, the holy One in the
' midſt of us. Thy thoughts are not as our

‘ thoughts ; therefore the ſons of men are not
‘ conſumed. Thou art a faithful God, keeping
‘ mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, tranſ-
‘ greſſion, and ſins, and that will by no means
‘ clear the guilty. We humbly adore and yield
‘ thee hearty thanks, for the exceeding great
‘ riches of thy grace in Chriſt Jeſus. In him
‘ thou art reconciling the world unto thyſelf ;
‘ not imputing unto them their treſpaſſes or their
‘ ſins. Encouraged by the numberleſs intima-
‘ tions of thy mercy and grace, O Lord, we pre-
‘ ſent this Penitent unto thee. Againſt thee,
‘ thee only, has he ſinned, and in thy ſight done
‘ this evil. O Lord, he hath hardened himſelf
‘ againſt reproof. Like profane Eſau, he hath de-
‘ ſpiſed his birth-right. He hath counted it a
‘ ſmall thing to be cut off from the Church of
‘ the living God. We muſt confeſs before thee,
‘ O thou moſt High, that he hath trodden un-
‘ der foot the ſon of God, and hath counted the
‘ blood of the covenant wherewith he was ſanc-
‘ tified, an unholy thing. O Lord, let him not
‘ be like Eſau, who found no place for repent-
‘ ance, though he ſought it carefully with tears.
‘ We beſeech thee, O our God, to fill his heart,
‘ more and more, with godly ſorrow. May he
‘ receive, from the Prince and Saviour exalted,
‘ true repentance, and remiſſion of ſins. May
‘ his heart be ſprinkled from an evil conſcience,
‘ and his body waſhed with pure water. Re-
‘ ceive him, O Lord, into thy fold, as we now,
‘ in thy name, receive him again into the Church.
‘ May his ſoul be bound in the bundle of life.
‘ Preſerve him from temptation ; and may he
‘ henceforth live in thy fear. O God, bleſs all
‘ thy people. May their love be confirmed to

‘ this

' this penitent. Let him that thinketh he ſtand-
' eth take heed leſt he fall. Let no evil furmi-
' ſing, againſt their brother, find place in their
' hearts: but may love, which covereth a mul-
' titude of ſins, poſſeſs every ſoul. Forgive, we
' beſeech thee, all our ſins, and preſerve us un-
' to thy heavenly kingdom and glory: for the
' ſake of Jeſus Chriſt, who is our Advocate in
' heaven; and who, with the Father, and the
' Holy Spirit, ever liveth and reigneth, in one
' undivided Godhead. *Amen.*'

Of the Solemnization of Marriage.

Marriage is not a ſacrament, nor peculiar to the Church of Chriſt. It is proper that every Commonwealth, for the good of ſociety, make laws to regulate Marriage, which all Citizens are bound to obey.

Chriſtians ought to marry in the Lord; therefore it is fit, that their marriage be ſolemnized by a lawful Miniſter, that ſpecial inſtruction may be given them, and ſuitable prayers made, when they enter into this relation.

Marriage is to be between one man and one woman only; and they are not to be within the degrees of conſanguinity or affinity prohibited by the word of God.

The parties ought to be of ſuch years of diſcretion as to be capable of making their own choice; and if they be under age, or live with their parents, the conſent of the parents, or others under whoſe care they are, ought to be previouſly obtained, and well certified to the Miniſter, before he proceeds to ſolemnize the marriage.

Parents

Parents ought neither to compel their children to marry contrary to their own inclinations, nor deny their consent without just and important reasons.

Marriage is of a public nature. The welfare of civil society, the happiness of families, and the credit of religion are deeply interested in it. Therefore the purpose of marriage ought to be sufficiently published a proper time, previously to the solemnization of it. It is enjoined on all Ministers to be careful that, in this matter, they neither transgress the laws of God, nor the laws of the community: And that they may not destroy the peace and comfort of families, they must be properly certified, with respect to the parties applying to them, that no just objections lie against their marriage.

Marriage must always be performed before a competent number of witnesses; and the Minister is to give a certificate of the marriage, when required.

When the parties present themselves for marriage, the Minister is to desire, if there is any person present who knows any lawful reason why these persons may not be joined together in the marriage relation, that they will now make it known, or ever after hold their peace.

No objections being made, he is then severally to address himself to the parties to be married, in the following or like words:

'You, sir, declare, in the presence of God, 'that you do not know any reason, by precon-'tract or otherwise, why you may not lawfully 'marry this woman.'

Upon his declaring he does not, the Minister shall address himself to the Bride, in the same or similar terms:

'You

'You, Madam, declare, in the presence of God, 'that you do not know any reason, by precon- 'tract or otherwise, why you may not lawfully 'marry this man.'

Upon her declaring she does not, he is to pray to the following import:

'Most holy, and most gracious God, we a- 'dore thee as the Maker of our bodies, and the 'father of our spirits. Be pleased to accept 'our grateful acknowledgments, that thou hast 'made us rational creatures; and that thou hast 'made us capable of the various blessings of the 'social life. We adore thee for the institution 'of marriage; and that thou hast made it ho- 'nourable in all. Be pleased to bless these per- 'sons who are about to be joined to each other 'in this intimate and tender relation. While 'they join hands may they join hearts; and be- 'ing united to each other in the marriage cove- 'nant, may they be united to the Lord Jesus in 'that covenant, which is ordered in all things 'and sure. May they enter upon this impor- 'tant relation in the fear of the Lord; and have 'abundant cause to adore and rejoice in that 'providence that hath formed it between them. 'We devoutly pray for thy gracious presence 'with us; for the pardon of our sins; and 'for the acceptance both of our persons and 'services; for the sake of Jesus Christ, thy Son, 'our only Lord and Saviour. *Amen*'

The Minister shall then proceed to give them some instruction, from the Scriptures, respecting the institution and duties of this state, shewing;

'That God has instituted marriage for the 'comfort and happiness of mankind, in declaring 'a man shall forsake his father and mother and 'cleave unto his wife, and that marriage is ho-

'nourable

' nourable in all ; that he hath appointed vari-
' ous duties, which are incumbent upon thoſe
' who enter into this relation ; ſuch as, a high e-
' ſteem and mutual love for another ; bear-
' ing with each other's infirmities and weak-
' neſſes, to which human nature is ſubject in its
' preſent lapſed ſtate; to encourage each other un-
' der the various ills of life ; to comfort one a-
' nother in ſickneſs ; in honeſty and induſtry to
' provide for each others temporal ſupport ; to
' pray for and encourage one another, in the
' things which pertain to God, and to their im-
' mortal ſouls ; and to live together as the heirs
' of the grace of life.'

Then the Miniſter ſhall cauſe the bridegroom and bride to join their right hands, and ſhall pronounce the marriage covenant, firſt to the man, in theſe words :

' You, ſir, take this woman, whom you hold
' by the hand, to be your lawful and married
' wife ; and you promiſe, and covenant, in the
' preſence of God and theſe witneſſes, that you
' will be unto her a loving and faithful huſband,
' until you ſhall be ſeparated by death.'

The Bridegroom ſhall expreſs his conſent, by ſaying, ' Yes I do.'

Then the Miniſter ſhall addreſs himſelf to the woman in theſe words :

' You, Madam, take this man, whom you
' hold by the hand, to be your lawful and mar-
' ried huſband ; and you promiſe, and cove-
' nant, in the preſence of God and theſe wit-
' neſſes, that you will be unto him a loving,
' faithful, and obedient wife, until you ſhall be
' ſeparated by death.'

The Bride ſhall expreſs her conſent, by ſaying, ' Yes, I do.'

Then

Then the minister is to say;

'I pronounce you, Husband and Wife, according to the ordinance of God; what therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.'

After this the Minister may exhort them, in a few words, to the mutual discharge of their duty.

Then let him conclude with a prayer to this effect.

'Most merciful and gracious God, in whom all the families of the earth are blessed, we pray for thy blessing to descend upon these persons, whom now, in thy holy providence, thou hast brought into the marriage relation. May they enter upon a family state in thy fear, and live in thy favour. Bless them with all spiritual and temporal blessings; Bless them in their basket, and in their store. May they dwell together in love, as joint heirs of the grace of life, that their prayers may not be hindered. We commit them, O Lord, to thy indulgent providence, praying, that goodness and mercy may attend them all the days of their appointed time. We thank thee, for the present joyful occasion; and that the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride is still heard among us. May we rejoice in thy fear. Keep us back from sin. Pardon all our transgressions. Help us all to live in the faithful discharge of the duties which are incumbent upon us, in our various relations. Guide us by thy counsel through this world, and afterwards admit us to that state of perfection, where there will be neither marrying nor giving in marriage, but where we shall be as the angels of thy presence: And now to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed everlasting praises. *Amen.*' Let

Let the Miniſter keep a proper regiſter, of the names of all perſons whom he marries, and of the time of their marriage, for the peruſal of all whom it may concern.

Of the Viſitation of the Sick.

When perſons are ſick, it is their duty, before their ſtrength and underſtanding fail them, to ſend for their Miniſter, and to make known to him, with prudence, their ſpiritual ſtate; or to conſult him on the concerns of their precious ſouls: And it is his duty to viſit them, at their requeſt, and to apply himſelf, with all tenderneſs and love, to adminiſter ſpiritual good to their immortal ſouls.

He ſhall inſtruct the ſick, out of the Scriptures, that diſeaſes ariſe not out of the ground, nor do they come by chance; but that they are directed and ſent by a wiſe and holy God, either for correction of ſin, for the trial of grace, for improvement in religion, or for other important ends: and that they ſhall work together for good to all thoſe who make a wiſe improvement of God's viſitation, neither deſpiſing his chaſtening hand, nor waxing weary of his rebukes.

If the Miniſter apprehend him to be groſly ignorant, he ſhall examine him upon the moſt plain and important principles of religion; and inſtruct him, in the nature of repentance and faith, and the way of acceptance with God, through the mediation and atonement of Jeſus Chriſt.

He ſhall exhort the ſick to examine himſelf; to ſearch his heart, and try his former ways, by the word of God; and aſſiſt him, by mentioning ſome of the obvious marks and evidences of ſincere piety.

If

If the ſick ſhall ſignify any ſcruple, doubt or temptation, under which he labours, the Miniſter, muſt endeavour to reſolve his doubts, and adminiſter inſtruction and direction, as the caſe may ſeem to require.

If the ſick appear to be a ſtupid, thoughtleſs and hardened ſinner, he ſhall endeavour to awaken his mind; to arouſe his conſcience; to convince him of the evil and danger of ſin; of the curſe of the law, and the wrath of God due to ſinners; to bring him to a humble and penitential ſenſe of his iniquities; and to ſtate before him the fulneſs of the grace and mercy of God, in and through the glorious Redeemer; the abſolute neceſſity of faith and repentance, in order to his being intereſted in the favour of God, or his obtaining everlaſting happineſs.

If the ſick perſon ſhall appear to have knowledge, to be of a tender conſcience, and to have been endeavouring to ſerve God in uprightneſs, though not without many failings and ſinful infirmities; or if his ſpirit be broken with a ſenſe of ſin, or through apprehenſions of the want of the divine favour; then it will be proper to adminiſter conſolation and encouragement to him, by ſetting before him the freeneſs and riches of the grace of God, the all-ſufficiency of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and the ſupporting promiſes of the goſpel.

The Miniſter muſt endeavour to guard the ſick perſon againſt ill-grounded perſuaſions of the mercy of God, without a vital union to Chriſt; and againſt unreaſonable fears of death and deſponding diſcouragements; againſt preſumption upon his own goodneſs and merit, upon the one hand; and againſt deſpair of the mercy and grace of God in Chriſt Jeſus, on the other.

In one word, it is the Miniſter's duty to adminiſter to the ſick perſon inſtruction, conviction, ſupport, conſolation or encouragement, as his caſe may ſeem to require.

At a proper time, when he is moſt compoſed, the Miniſter, if deſired, ſhall pray with and for him, in the following or like manner.

'O thou, ſovereign, great and glorious Jehovah, we bow down before thee, and acknowledge 'our abſolute dependance upon thee. Thou 'haſt made it our duty to pray with and for the 'ſick and the afflicted. Enable us, at this time, 'to pray in faith, to confeſs our ſins with penitential ſentiments of heart, and to draw near 'to thee, in humble dependance upon the atonement of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. 'We acknowledge, that we are guilty ſinners, 'ſinners by nature and ſinners by practice. Sin is 'the procuring cauſe of all the calamities which 'come upon us. Sin has introduced ſickneſs, 'pain, miſery and death into our apoſtate world. 'Affliction cometh not forth of the duſt, neither 'doth trouble ſpring out of the ground. O 'Lord, thou killeſt and thou makeſt alive, thou 'woundeſt and thou healeſt, thou layeſt on beds 'of ſickneſs, and thou raiſeſt up again. Thou 'haſt brought us into this world, thou continueſt us in it, and takeſt us out of it according to 'thy holy pleaſure. We know and are aſſured, 'that the God of all the earth always does that 'which is right.

'O moſt merciful Father, extend compaſſion 'to this perſon on a bed of ſickneſs, languiſhment and diſtreſs. Shew unto him why thou 'contendeſt with him, and why thou afflicteſt 'him very ſore. Rebuke him not in thine anger,

' ger, nor chaſten him in thy hot diſpleaſure.
' When thou with rebukes doſt chaſten man for
' ſin, thou makeſt his beauty to conſume away
' like a moth. Let him neither deſpiſe the chaſt-
' ning of the Lord, nor faint when he is rebu-
' ked of him. Remove thy ſtroke, we pray thee.
' O ſpare a little, that he may recover ſtrength,
' before he go hence, and be here no more.
' Sanctify to him this viſitation of thy provi-
' dence. Enable him to make a ſuitable improve-
' ment of it, for his ſoul's good. Prepare him
' for all the events of thy will. If thou art pleaſ-
' ed to recover him from this affliction, and to
' add unto his days, we pray that he may riſe to
' health and ſtrength, with a faithful remem-
' brance of thy correcting hand, and with full
' purpoſes of holineſs and new obedience.
' When thou haſt tried him, O Lord, let him
' come forth as gold which has been tried.
' Speak the word and he ſhall be healed. Deal
' bountifully with him and he ſhall live and
' praiſe thee. But if this ſickneſs be unto death,
' and thou haſt determined to finiſh his days by
' the preſent viſitation, O Lord, have mercy
' upon his precious ſoul. Pardon all his ſins.
' Give him clear evidences of an intereſt in thy
' favour. May he find, by ſweet experience,
' his ſoul united to Jeſus by a new and living
' faith. Save him from the temptations of Sa-
' tan. Take away the ſting of death, and cauſe
' him to triumph over the grave; and, when
' his fleſh and his heart faileth, be thou the
' ſtrength of his heart, and his portion forever.
' O Lord, we wait for thy ſalvation. We com-
' mit him unto thee, praying, that if he live, he
' may live to thee, and if he die, that he may

' die

'die to thee, that whether he liveth or dieth he 'may be thine. Hear us, O our God, and an-'swer us, only for the ſake of our divine Re-'deemer; to whom, with the Father, and Spi-'rit of all grace, be given glory, and honour, 'and dominion, and power, forever and ever. '*Amen.*'

The Miniſter ſhall admoniſh him to ſettle his worldly affairs; to make reſtitution or ſatisfaction where he hath done any wrong; to be reconciled to thoſe with whom he may have been at variance; to forgive all men their treſpaſſes againſt him, as he expects forgiveneſs from God; and, if he be rich, to diſpoſe of ſome part of his worldly ſubſtance for charitable purpoſes, or for the Church of Chriſt.

Laſtly, the Miniſter may improve the preſent occaſion to exhort thoſe about the ſick, to conſider their mortality; to turn to the Lord and make their peace with him; in health to prepare for ſickneſs, death and judgment.

Of the Burial of the Dead.

When any Chriſtian departs this life, let the corpſe be taken care of in a decent manner, and be kept a proper and ſufficient time before interment.

When the ſeaſon for the funeral comes, let all who are preſent, conduct themſelves with gravity. We highly diſapprove of the uſe of ſpirituous liquors at the funeral of any perſons of our communion; and we recommend the utter abolition of a cuſtom ſo offenſive and improper. It is decent and proper, that perſons be interred, in a manner ſuitable to their rank and condition while living.

Let

Let the Chriſtian friends, who attend at the houſe of the funeral, apply themſelves to ſerious meditation and diſcourſe; and the Miniſter, if preſent, may exhort them to conſider the frailty of life, and the importance of being prepared for death and eternity.

Then let the dead body be decently attended to the grave, and there immediately interred without any ceremony.

Of Faſting; and of the obſervation of days of Thankſgiving.

There is no day under the Goſpel commanded to be kept holy, except the Lord's day, which is the chriſtian ſabbath.

Thoſe ſeaſons, vulgarly called holidays, not being appointed in the word of God, but having been introduced in times of ſuperſtition, and abuſed to much ſin, are not to be obſerved by the people of our communion.

Nevertheleſs to obſerve days of faſting and thankſgiving, as the extraordinary diſpenſations of divine providence may direct, we judge both ſcriptural and rational.

Faſts and thankſgivings may be obſerved by individual Chriſtians, or families, in private, by particular Congregations, by a number of Congregations contiguous to each other, by the Congregations under the care of a Preſbytery, or of a Synod, or by all the Congregations of our Church.

It muſt be left to the judgment and diſcretion of every Chriſtian and family to determine, when it is proper to obſerve a private faſt or thankſgiving; and to the Church-ſeſſion to determine

for

for particular Congregations ; and to the Presbyteries or Synods to determine for larger districts. When it is deemed expedient that a fast or thanksgiving should be general, the call for them must be judged of by the Synod or General Council. And if at any time the civil power should think it proper to appoint a fast or thanksgiving, it is the duty of the Ministers and people of our communion, as we live under a christian government, to pay all due respect to the same.

Public notice is to be given a convenient time before the day of fasting or thanksgiving comes, that persons may so order their temporal affairs, that they may properly attend to the duties thereof.

There shall be public worship upon all such days ; and let the prayers, psalms, portions of scripture to be read, and sermons, be all, in a special manner adapted to the occasion.

On fast days, let the Minister point out the authority and providences calling to the observation thereof ; and let him spend a more than usual portion of time in solemn prayer, particular confession of sin, especially of the sins of the day and place, with their aggravations, which have brought down the judgments of heaven. And let the whole day be spent in deep humiliation and mourning before God.

On days of thanksgiving, he is to give the like information, respecting the authority and providences which call to the observance of them ; and to spend a more than usual part of the time in the giving of thanks, agreeably to the occasion, and in singing psalms or hymns of praise.

It is the duty of people, on these days, to rejoice with holy gladness of heart ; and to mani-

fest

feſt the liberality, which is their great duty upon ſuch occaſions, by ſending portions and giving gifts. But let trembling be ſo joined with our mirth, as that no exceſs or unbecoming levity be indulged.

Of the Ordination of Miniſters of the Goſpel.

The Ordination of a Perſon, to the Work of the Goſpel Miniſtry, is the ſetting Him apart to this holy Office, agreeably to the Inſtitution of Chriſt, the great Head of the Church. This is the Buſineſs of the Preſbytery.

When the Perſon to be ordained has paſſed through the Trials preſcribed in the Form of Government and Diſcipline, or ſuch others as ſhall be deemed ſatisfactory; the Preſbytery being met for his ordination, the Sermon being ended, and the Engagements, directed in the Form of Government, &c. being taken, the Perſon, who is to be ordained, ſhall kneel down in the moſt convenient part of the Church, and the Miniſter, who has been appointed to preſide, ſhall lay his Right Hand upon his Head, and then all the other Miniſters of the Preſbytery preſent, ſhall alſo lay their Right Hands upon his Head; and the preſiding Miniſter ſhall pray in the following or like manner:

'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, We 'adore Thee, as the one, living, and true God, 'the Creator and the Preſerver of all things. 'We adore Thee as the God and Father of our 'Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and in him reconciling the 'world unto Thyſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them. We moſt devoutly praiſe Thee 'for the unſpeakable Gift of a Saviour, and for

'the

' the Plan of saving lost Men through him; for his
' Incarnation, his Atonement, his Resurrection
' and Ascension to Glory. We praise Thee,
' that, when He ascended up on high, He led
' Captivity captive, and gave Gifts unto Men:
' that he gave some, Apostles; and some, Pro-
' phets; and some, Evangelists; and some, Pas-
' tors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the
' Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the
' edifying of the Body of Christ.

' We thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou art
' raising up and qualifying Men for this great
' Work, from age to age, and throughout the
' several Parts of thy Church. We thank
' Thee, that thou hast inclined the heart of this
' thy Servant to devote Himself to the Lord, in
' the Work of the Ministry. We pray that
' Thou wouldst graciously accept of the Dedi-
' cation which He now makes of Himself to
' Thee, in the Gospel of thy Son.

' We do, in the name of the Father, and of
' the Son and of the Holy Ghost, ordain him
' Bishop of this Church; and set him apart to the
' Office of the holy Ministry. We most humbly
' pray, that thou wouldest graciously approve
' and ratify in heaven, what we now do in thy
' name, upon earth.

' O most merciful God, grant this thy servant a
' double portion of thy Spirit. Enable him to
' be diligent and faithful in the discharge of the
' great duties of his ministry. May he be wise
' in winning souls to Christ. Make him an e-
' minent blessing to thy Church in general, and
' to these thy People, over whom thou art set-
' ting him, in particular. Enable him, O Lord,
' to take heed unto himself, and to his doctrine,
' and to continue in them, that he may both save
' himself, and them that hear him. ' Gra-

'Gracious God, pardon all our ſins, and hear 'us, for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord: 'And let the Glory be to the Father, and to 'the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and for 'ever. *Amen.*'

Prayer being ended, and the Perſon ordained having riſen from his knees, the Miniſter, who preſides, ſhall give him the Bible, addreſſing him in words to the following import:

'You have now received authority to preach 'the Goſpel, and to adminiſter all the Ordinances 'inſtituted by Chriſt. In token whereof, take this 'holy book, which contains your commiſſion; ſtu-'dy it carefully; and conduct yourſelf, in every 'part of your office, in conformity to it.'

Then he ſhall take him by the Right Hand; ſaying, in words to this purpoſe; 'We give 'You the Right Hand of Fellowſhip, to take 'part of this Miniſtry with us." Or thus: 'In token of our acceptance of you, to take 'part with us in this ſacred Miniſtry, to which 'we have now ſet you apart, we do, agreeably 'to the Apoſtolic example, give you the Right 'Hand of Fellowſhip.' Then the Miniſters who laid hands upon him, ſhall, in their order, take him by the right hand.

The Miniſter who preſided, or ſome other appointed to the buſineſs, ſhall then addreſs him on the Nature and Importance of the Office to which he has been ſet apart: charging him,

'To take heed unto himſelf, and to all the 'flock, over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made 'him Overſeer; to feed the Church of God, 'which he hath purchaſed with his own blood; 'to love Chriſt, and to feed his ſheep: ſhewing 'him, that a Biſhop muſt take the overſight of

them, not by conſtraint, but willingly; not for ‘ filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind; neither as ‘ being Lord over God's Heritage, but as an ‘ Example to the Flock, in Word, in Converſa- ‘ tion, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity; ‘ Exhorting him, that he neglect not the Gift ‘ that is in him, but that he meditate upon theſe ‘ things, and give himſelf wholly to them, that ‘ his profiting may appear unto all; that he take ‘ heed, not only to Himſelf, but alſo to his Doc- ‘ trine; and that he continue ſtedfaſt therein; ‘ that he bear patiently all the Trials to which ‘ the faithful diſcharge of the duties of his office ‘ may at any time ſubject him, in humble depen- ‘ dance upon the grace and faithfulneſs of his ‘ Lord, who has promiſed to be with his Mini- ‘ ſters even to the end of the world; that he ‘ preach the word, be inſtant, in ſeaſon and out ‘ of ſeaſon, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all ‘ long-ſuffering and doctrine; and that he rule ‘ well his own houſe; encouraging him to hope ‘ and expect, that, when the chief Shepherd ‘ ſhall appear, he ſhall receive a Crown of Glory ‘ that fadeth not away.’

After this, the ſame Miniſter, or another as may be moſt convenient, ſhall addreſs the Congregation (if the perſon has been ordained to a particular charge) on the ineſtimable bleſſing of a judicious and faithful adminiſtration of the Word and the ordinances of the Goſpel in a ſtated way. He ſhall lay before them the duties, which a People owe their Miniſter, with the obligations to a conſcientious diſcharge thereof: ſhewing them;

‘ That they are bound to eſteem and honour ‘ him for his works ſake; to attend upon his ‘ miniſtry

'ministry with diligence and steadiness, and to 'study to profit thereby; to receive, with meek-'ness, his admonitions and reproofs, and to submit 'to the discipline of Christ's house, administred 'by him, in conjunction with the other officers 'of the Church; to be much in prayer to God 'for him, as one who watches for their souls, 'and must give an account of his stewardship; 'to afford, with punctuality and cheerfulness, 'the worldly support, which, in this solemn 'manner, they have promised him, before God, 'and the holy Angels, and his Church; assur-'ing them, that the great Judge of quick and 'dead will, at the last day, acknowledge what is 'done unto his servants, as done unto himself: 'And finally, exhorting them to study the things 'that make for peace, both with their Minister, 'and among themselves, that he and they may 'appear with joy in the great day of Christ.'

The Minister having finished this address, shall pray, and give thanks, in the following or like manner:

'Most merciful Father, we thank Thee for 'the ministry of reconciliation; that Thou hast 'committed this treasure to earthen vessels, that 'the excellency of the power may be of God and 'not of man. We thank Thee, that Thou hast 'provided thy Church in this place with one 'to take the oversight of them in the Lord. 'We beseech Thee to qualify thy Servant, 'more and more, for the faithful, the honoura-'ble, and the successful discharge of his high 'trust. Encourage his heart, and strengthen 'his hands therein, from day to day. Grant 'him, O Lord, a deep and an abiding sense of 'his dependance upon the influences of the

'Spirit

'Spirit of Chriſt for the ſucceſs of his labours. 'May he have many ſeals of his miniſtry in this 'place; many as his crown of rejoicing in the 'preſence of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt at his com-'ing. Render him, we pray Thee, happily in-'ſtrumental in promoting true and undefiled 'Religion, before the Father, and the Lord 'Jeſus Chriſt, throughout the Church in general, 'as well as in this place. May this Congrega-'tion be properly ſenſible of the rich bleſſing 'Thou haſt this day conferred upon them; and 'may they be enabled to receive and improve 'it in a ſuitable manner. May they grow and 'increaſe, under the miniſtry of thy Servant, 'with the increaſe of God. May many be 'added to them daily, of ſuch as ſhall be ſaved 'in the day of Chriſt. We pray that thy Ser-'vant and this People may be mutual comforts 'and bleſſings to each other, for a long time to 'come; and may their appearance, in the day 'of the Lord, be to their eternal joy, through Je-'ſus Chriſt, our Lord. *Amen.*'

A Pſalm ſhall then be ſung, and the Congregation diſmiſſed with the uſual Bleſſing.

The ſubjects of the Charges, to the Miniſter and People, in the caſe of Ordination, will furniſh proper matter for the addreſſes of the like nature, in the caſe of the inſtalment of a Miniſter formerly ordained.

Every Preſbytery will be beſt able to judge of the age at which it is proper to ordain any perſon to the work of the Goſpel Miniſtry; but we think that, in ordinary caſes, the Candidate ſhould be, at leaſt, twenty-four years of age.

The

Beſides the public worſhip in Congregations, it is the indiſpenſable duty of each perſon alone, in ſecret, and of every family by itſelf in private, to pray to and worſhip God.

Secret worſhip is moſt plainly enjoined by our Lord. In this duty every one, apart by himſelf, is to ſpend ſome time in prayer, reading the ſcriptures, holy meditation, and ſerious ſelf examination. The many advantages, ariſing from a conſcientious attendance upon theſe duties, are beſt known to thoſe who are found in the faithful diſcharge of them.

Family worſhip, which ought to be performed by every family, ordinarily morning and evening, conſiſts in prayer, reading the ſcriptures, and ſinging praiſes.

The Head of the family, who is to lead in this ſervice, ought to be careful that all the members of his houſhold duly attend, and that none withdraw themſelves unneceſſarily from any part of family worſhip; and that all refrain from their common buſineſs, while the ſcriptures are read, and gravely attend to the ſame, no leſs than when prayer or praiſe is offered up.

Let no idler, or vagrant perſon, perform worſhip in families; ſeeing perſons tainted with errors, or aiming at diviſions, may be ready to creep into houſes and lead captive unſtable ſouls. But this is not to be underſtood, as prohibiting the Head of a family from inviting a chriſtian friend to pray in his family who may be occaſionally preſent, and whoſe character, for ſtedfaſtneſs and piety, is eſtabliſhed.

At family worſhip, let each family keep by themſelves, without inviting perſons of other families to join with them.

Let not any ſociety or conference meetings, under pretence of more ſpiritual advantage, ever interfere with or ſet aſide the due order and regular worſhip of families; for the latter is a divine inſtitution, and of much greater utility and importance.

Let every Head of a family be careful to catechiſe and inſtruct his family, at leaſt once every week; and we think the moſt proper time for theſe exercifes is on Sabbath evenings. And we judge it would be much more for the edification of Chriſtian families, and for the advancement of true religion, for families, apart by themſelves, to ſpend their Sabbath evenings in catechiſing, holy conference, repetition of the ſermons they heard through the day, in prayer, praiſe, and other religious duties, than in running about to attend ſociety or other meetings, as the practice of too many is, even to the neglect, we fear, of common family duties.

As many as can conceive prayer ought carefully to improve this gift of God; yet for the ſake of the young and more baſhful Heads of families, we have ſubjoined a few forms of Family Prayer, earneſtly recommending it to all ſuch, not to be negligent in cultivating a ſpirit of prayer, and to uſe theſe forms no longer than till they ſhall have learned to expreſs the deſires of their hearts to God for their families, with ſome degree of propriety.

A PRAYER for a FAMILY, on the morning of the LORD'S DAY.

'O Thou bleſſed, glorious, and highly exalted 'Lord, our God, we deſire, with all humility 'and reverence, to bow down and offer homage 'and worſhip to Thee, this morning of thy 'holy day. We adore Thee as the King eter- 'nal, immortal, inviſible, the only wiſe God. 'Thou art worthy of all honour, love, worſhip 'and praiſe, from all thy intelligent creatures. 'Angels and Arch-angels proſtrate themſelves 'before thy throne, and they ceaſe not, day or 'night, to aſcribe glory, honour, dominion and 'power, to him that ſitteth on the throne, and to 'the Lamb forever and ever. We, who are 'worms of the duſt, and have our habitation in 'houſes of clay, deſire to unite with this celeſtial 'company, in praiſing, magnifying, and adoring 'thy name. We worſhip Thee, as our Creator, 'Preſerver, Benefactor, and Redeemer. In 'Thee we live, and move, and have our being.

'We acknowledge, before Thee, that we are 'fallen creatures, miſerable ſinners. We have 'forſaken Thee, the fountain of living waters; 'and have hewn out for ourſelves ciſterns, bro- 'ken ciſterns, which can hold no water. Behold 'we are vile, we are altogether as an unclean 'thing in thy ſight. But glory to thy name in 'the higheſt, that thou haſt opened a door of 'hope for ſinners; that thou haſt revealed a 'glorious ſalvation in the goſpel; that thou haſt 'ſet forth Chriſt Jeſus, to be the propitiation 'for ſin, and cauſed us to hear the glad tidings 'of peace and reconciliation through faith in his 'name. In his name, we come unto thee, con-

'feſſing

' feſſing our ſins, and making ſupplication for
' all the mercies which we need.

' O Lord, moſt holy, pardon our ſins ; blot
' out all our tranſgreſſions. Juſtify us freely by
' thy grace, through the redemption that is in
' Jeſus Chriſt. Receive us into thy favour,
' which is life, and make us the ſubjects of thy
' loving kindneſs, which is better than life. A-
' dopt us into thy family, and ſanctify us by the
' powerful influences of thy Holy Spirit. Ena-
' ble us to ſanctify this thy Sabbath, and to keep
' it holy. Prepare our hearts for all the holy
' duties and ſervices of this day. Let the day-
' ſpring from on high viſit us, and the Sun of
' Righteouſneſs ſhine upon us, with healing in
' his wings.

' We praiſe thee, O God, that thou haſt a-
' dorned thy weeks with ſabbaths ; that thou
' haſt ſanctified one day in ſeven, to be kept ho-
' ly to thyſelf ; and that thou haſt brought us
' to ſee another of the days of the Son of man.
' O that we may be in the ſpirit on this thy day.
' Let God, who, on the firſt day of the world,
' commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs,
' on this firſt day of the week, ſhine in our hearts,
' to give us the light of the knowledge of the
' glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt. This
' is the day, which the Lord hath made, we will
' be glad and rejoice in it. O that we may this
' day experience the power of Chriſt's reſurrec-
' tion. As he was raiſed from the dead by the
' glory of the Father, ſo let us be raiſed from
' a ſtate of death in ſin, to walk with him in new-
' neſs of life, and be prepared to ſit with him in
' heavenly places.

' Prepare us, O our God, for the public ' ordinances of thy houſe this day. May we, ' with our whole hearts, join in the prayers and ' praiſes of thy church. Enable us to hear thy ' word with attention, to receive it in faith and ' love, to lay it up in our hearts, and to practiſe ' it in our lives. Give thy preſence, O Lord ' our God to thy miniſtering ſervant, who may ' lead our worſhip, and ſpeak to us in thy name ' to-day. Give him the tongue of the learned, ' that he may ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to weary ' ſouls. May thy ſaints be refreſhed and com- ' forted; may ſinners be awakened and con- ' verted. May this be a glorious day in thy ' Zion.

' Accompliſh, O Lord, we beſeech thee, all ' thy deſigns of mercy. Let thy goſpel be pro- ' pagated from the riſing to the ſetting ſun. Let ' it run, have free courſe and be glorified Be ' in all the worſhipping aſſemblies of thy peo- ' ple this day. Fill thy Churches with thy glo- ' ry. Clothe thy Miniſters with ſalvation, that ' thy people may ſhout aloud for joy. Keep our ' hearts, and keep our minds this day. Pre- ' ſerve us from evil and worldly thoughts. Let ' no vain converſation proceed out of our lips. ' Save us from the temptations of Satan. Hand ' us in peace and ſafety through all the chang- ' ing ſcenes of time. Be the ſtay and ſtaff of our ' ſouls in the ſolemn hour of death; and finally ' bring us to glory; only for the ſake of our Lord ' and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who taught us, when ' we pray, to ſay;

' Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed ' be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will ' be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us

'this day our daily bread; and forgive us our 'treſpaſſes as we forgive them that treſpaſs 'againſt us. And lead us not into temptation, 'but deliver us from evil: for thine is the king-'dom, and the power, and the glory, forever. 'Amen.'

A PRAYER for a FAMILY, on the evening of the LORD'S DAY.

'O Thou holy, ever bleſſed, and ever glori-'ous Lord our God: Thou art God over 'all, and rich in mercy to all that call upon thy 'name. Thou art moſt wiſe and powerful, the 'King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Thy 'kingdom is an everlaſting kingdom; and thy 'dominion from generation to generation. This 'evening of thy holy day, O Lord, we preſent 'ourſelves before thee, to offer up our evening 'ſacrifice of prayer and of praiſe. Thou haſt 'given us to enjoy another Sabbath. Thy days 'are ſweet to our ſouls; thy Sabbaths are our 'delight. We bleſs and praiſe Thee, with our 'whole hearts, for another of thy holy days. A 'day ſpent in thy courts, is better than a thou-'ſand elſewhere. How amiable are thy ta-'ernacles, O Lord of hoſts! Thou haſt carried 'us to thy houſe of prayer; thou haſt cauſed 'us to hear thy word, and we have had the 'privilege of joining in the prayers and praiſes 'of thy people, in thy church.

'Glory to God in the higheſt, for all his 'mercies and benefits to us. How great are 'the privileges we enjoy, above thouſands of 'our fellow creatures, who are as good by na-'ture as we are. What multitudes are bowing

'down

' down to ſtocks and ſtones, are groping in
' more than midnight darkneſs, and know not
' Thee, the true God, nor Jeſus Chriſt, whom
' thou haſt ſent; while we are favoured with thy
' Sabbaths and thine ordinances, and enjoy the
' glorious light of thy goſpel.

' O Lord, we confeſs we are unworthy of
' the leaſt of all thy mercies; and that thou art
' diſtinguiſhing us above others, is owing to thy
' mere, free, holy, and ſovereign pleaſure. With
' propriety may we aſcribe all to the glory of thy
' name, and ſay, even ſo, Father, for ſo it ſeemeth
' good in thy ſight. We call upon our ſouls,
' and all within us, to bleſs and magnify thy
' name, for thy diſtinguiſhing favours to us, thine
' undeſerving creatures. We praiſe thee for
' the gift of thine only begotten Son; for the
' redemption of Chriſt Jeſus our Lord; for the
' covenant of mercy; for the means of grace,
' and the hopes of eternal life.

' O thou Father of mercies, forgive what thy
' pure eyes have ſeen amiſs in us this day. For-
' give us, that we have not ſerved thee with more
' love, zeal, and godly ſincerity. In all things
' we have ſinned, and come ſhort of thy glory.
' Pardon, O Lord, our innumerable failings and
' imperfections. Forgive the iniquities of our
' moſt holy things. After we have done all, we
' have juſt reaſon to acknowledge ourſelves un-
' profitable ſervants. But thou haſt declared, O
' God, that they who confeſs and forſake their
' ſins, ſhall find mercy. Thou art faithful to
' forgive us our ſins. We pray, moſt merciful
' Father, that thou wouldſt forgive us, and ac-
' cept of us in the beloved. Accept of us, and
' of our poor and imperfect ſervices. Give

' us

'us grace, O God, that we may never for-
'ſake thy ways, nor turn from following af-
'ter thee; but that, with purpoſe of heart, we
'may always cleave unto the Lord. Let us not
'count our lives dear unto ourſelves ſo that we
'may finiſh our courſe, with comfort and joy,
'to the glory of thy name.

'O Lord our God, we pray that thou wouldſt
'follow thy word and ordinances with a bleſ-
'ſing wherever they have been diſpenſed on this
'thy holy ſabbath. Bleſs all the Miniſters of
'thy goſpel. Make them faithful to Chriſt, and
'to the ſouls of men. Pity the poor, the af-
'flicted, ſorrowful and diſtreſſed. Enlarge the
'borders of the Redeemer's kingdom. Let all
'the nations flow unto it. Haſten the downfal
'of the man of ſin; and let pure and undefiled
'religion before God, and the Father, be revi-
'ved, and made to flouriſh in all places.

'Take us, O Lord, under thy protection
'this night. Enable us to cloſe the day with
'thee. May we lie down in peace, and our
'ſleep be ſweet and refreſhing to us. Bring us
'to the light of to-morrow; and may our ſouls
'rejoice and praiſe thee, in the out-goings of
'the morning. Enable us to carry much of the
'Sabbath with us through the week. May we
'ſet the Lord always before us. Prepare us for
'all that is before us in time. Be our guide
'through life, our ſupport in death, and our
'everlaſting portion. Now to the king eternal,
'immortal, inviſible, the only wiſe God; to the
'Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, be ho-
'nour and glory, dominion and praiſe, through
'Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*'

A MORNING PRAYER for a FAMILY.

'O thou God of all conſolation! O thou 'preſerver of men! We adore thee as the foun-'tain of all being, perfection, and bleſſedneſs. 'We have lain down, ſlept, and awaked in 'mercy; for the Lord hath ſuſtained us. Thou 'haſt heard our evening prayer, watched over 'us in our unguarded moments, and brought us, 'in circumſtances of comfort, to the light of 'this morning. Day unto day uttereth ſpeech, 'and night unto night ſheweth knowledge. 'Thou draweſt over us the ſhadows of the 'evening; and thou cauſeſt the outgoings of the 'morning. Thou art good to all, and thy ten-'der mercies are over all thy works. We give 'thee moſt ſincere thanks for the preſervation of 'the night paſt, and the favours of the morning. 'No plague has come nigh our dwelling; we 'live, are in health, and are brought in ſafety 'to the light and comforts of another day. We 'thank thee, O Lord, that our ſleep has not 'been death, nor our beds our graves; but that 'thou haſt refreſhed and ſtrengthened us, and 'we rejoice before thee.

'Thou, O Lord, art the God of the families 'of Iſrael; thou art the God of our family. 'O cauſe thy bleſſing to reſt upon our houſe, 'and fill our ſouls with joy and gladneſs. We 'acknowledge before thee, O God, that we 'are guilty ſinners. We have ſinned againſt 'thee, as individuals; we have ſinned againſt 'thee, as a family. Parents, and children, and 'all of us, are ſinners in thy ſight. We were 'ſhapen in ſin, and brought forth in iniquity: 'We are altogether as an unclean thing before 'thee,

' thee. Yet, glory to thy name in the higheſt, ' notwithſtanding our unworthineſs, thou art ' good, and doing us good continually.

' We praiſe thee for the goſpel, for Jeſus ' Chriſt, and the method of ſalvation through ' faith in him. It is an unſpeakable privilege, ' that we have acceſs to the throne of thy grace, ' through the Lord Jeſus, thine only begotten ' and eternal Son. O look in compaſſion upon ' us, and, for Chriſt's ſake, pardon all our of- ' fences. Caſt our iniquities into the depths of ' the ſea, and remember our tranſgreſſions no ' more ; but be merciful unto us, as thou art ' unto thoſe that love thy name. Sanctify us ' thoroughly by the power of thy grace ; ſubdue ' all our luſts and corruptions, and make us holy ' as thou, the Lord our God, art holy. Let thy ' peace rule in our hearts, and thy law govern in ' our minds ; and let the conſolations of our God ' be our ſtrength and our ſong, in the houſe of ' our pilgrimage. O thou Father of Mercies, ' be thou the portion of our ſouls ; lift upon us ' the light of thy countenance ; put gladneſs into ' our hearts, more than they have, whoſe corn ' and wine and oil are increaſed.

' We commit ourſelves, O Lord, to thy care ' and keeping this day ; watch over us for good ; ' compaſs us about with thy favour as with a ' ſhield. Preſerve us from evil ; yea, the Lord ' preſerve and keep our ſouls ; preſerve our go- ' ing out and coming in ; keep us in health and ' ſafety ; bleſs our employments ; proſper us in ' all our lawful undertakings ; give us comfort ' and ſucceſs in our buſineſs ; let us eat of the ' labour of our hands ; and may it be well with ' us. Prepare us for all the events of this day ;

' for

' for we know not what a day may bring forth.
' Give us grace to do the work of this day, ac-
' cording as the duties of it may require. Give
' us the rule over our ſpirits, and the govern-
' ment of our paſſions. Keep us from ſin; and
' may we not ſpeak unadviſedly with our lips.
' Make us conſcientious in all our dealings.
' Arm us againſt temptation; uphold us in our
' integrity; and may we be in thy fear all the
' day long.

' Lord, plead thy cauſe in the world; and
' build up thy Church, in its beauty, glory, and
' purity. Bleſs miniſters and people, rulers and
' ruled. Be gracious to our relatives and friends.
' Dwell in the families that call upon thy name.
' Forgive our enemies; and grant unto us a right
' and charitable frame of ſpirit, towards all men,
' and all that is their's. Viſit thoſe that are in
' affliction. Heal the ſick; eaſe the pained;
' ſuccour the tempted; relieve the oppreſſed;
' and give joy to thoſe that mourn in Zion.
' Deal with us and our family, according to the
' tenor of the everlaſting covenant, which is well
' ordered in all things and ſure. This is all our
' ſalvation, and all our deſire. We aſk and of-
' fer all in the name of our once crucified, but
' now glorified and exalted Redeemer, in whom
' we deſire ever to be found, and to whom,
' with thee, O Father, and the co-equal Spirit
' of grace, be aſcribed all bleſſing, glory, and
' praiſe, both now and forever. *Amen.*'

An EVENING PRAYER for a FAMILY.

' O thou bleſſed, ever glorious, and eternal
Jehovah; we adore thee, as our maker, as

' our

' our preſerver, and as our God. Thou art the
' benefactor of the univerſe ; thou giveſt life,
' and breath, and being, unto all. Thou haſt
' carried us through the toils and buſineſs of
' another day ; thou haſt ſtrengthened us, fed
' and clothed us all our life long. Having ob-
' tained help of God, we continue to this time.
' We are the monuments of thy ſparing mercy ;
' and witneſſes for thee, that thou art gracious:
' Thou art God, and not man ; therefore we are
' not conſumed. Day unto day, and night unto
' night, do teſtify, that thou art good, and doing
' good continually. None who ſeek, and put
' their truſt in thee, ſhall ever be put to ſhame.
' Thou makeſt the outgoings of the morning,
' and of the evening to rejoice over us. By thy
' indulgent goodneſs, and merciful loving kind-
' neſs, we are brought to the cloſe of another
' day. Bleſſed be the Lord, who daily loadeth
' us with his benefits. We have received the
' mercies of the day, though we have come far
' ſhort in the duties thereof.

' We thank thee, with our whole hearts, for
' the favours and bleſſings of another day, for
' the comfortable uſe of thy good creatures;
' our bodily health, our friends and all our
' enjoyments. We bleſs thee, that thou haſt
' ſucceeded us, in the labours of our hands,
' this day ; that no evil accident hath befallen
' us ; that thou haſt not made the wilderneſs
' our habitation, and a barren land our dwel ing:
' We praiſe thee for our public tranquillity ; and
' that thou haſt given us a good land in which
' we dwell ſafely. Above all we bleſs thee for
' Jeſus Chriſt, and the glorious plan of reconci-
' liation through faith in his name. Glory to

' thy

' thy name, O thou eternal God, that thou haſt
' cauſed us to hear the joyful ſound of ſalva-
' tion through a Redeemer.

' We confeſs, O Lord, that we are ſinners, and
' that we are leſs than the leaſt of all thy mercies.
' This day hath added to the ſins of our lives. Alas!
' we miſpend our time, fail in our duty, follow after
' vanities, and forſake our own mercies. We offend
' with our tongues. Who can underſtand his
' errors? cleanſe us from our ſecret faults. We
' pray thee to grant us repentance for all our
' ſins; forgive us all our treſpaſſes; pardon the
' tranſgreſſions of the day paſt. O that the
' blood of Chriſt may cleanſe us from all iniquity.
' May we lie down this night in peace with
' God; may our ſouls return unto thee, and
' comfortably repoſe in thee as our reſt. May
' we live penitential, believing, humble, and
' thankful lives. Accept us graciouſly, and love
' us freely. Make us holy for thy name's ſake;
' and may we live in thy love, in thy favour and
' friendſhip, all the days of our appointed time.
' We commit ourſelves to thee, O Lord our
' God, and deſire to dwell in the ſecret place
' of the Moſt High, and to abide under the
' ſhadow of the Almighty. Let the Lord be
' our habitation and our heritage forever. Make
' a hedge of protection around us this night,
' around our houſe, and all that we have, that
' [illegible] may befal us, that no plague may come
' [illegible] our dwelling. May the God of Iſrael,
' [illegible] neither ſlumbers nor ſleeps, be our keeper.
' [illegible] our bodies with quiet and comforta-
' ble reſt, and bring us to the light of another
' day, and fit us for all thy will therein. And
' as we are brought one day nearer to our latter

'end, Lord, help us so to number our days, as 'to apply our hearts to true wisdom. When 'we put off our clothes for rest, may we be 'mindful, that we must soon put off these mortal 'bodies, and make our bed in the land of dark-'ness. O prepare us for the sleep of death, 'that, when we come to resign this mortal breath, 'we may feel, in our souls, the joyful hope of 'an eternal rest with God. Do thou, in whom 'all the families of the earth are blessed, bless 'our family, with all spiritual blessings in Christ 'Jesus; and grant us all those temporal blessings 'thou seest convenient for us.

'In compassion, O Lord, look upon a lost 'world; send thy gospel where it is not, and 'make it successful where it is. Let the church 'of Christ every where flourish and prevail; and 'let not any weapon formed against Zion pros-'per. Bless our land, that, in the peace there-'of, we may have peace. Own thy ministers in 'their work; and rule in the hearts of our 'rulers. Let the rising generation be blessed 'of thee; and fill the whole earth with thy 'glory. Do for us, we pray thee, abundantly 'above what we can ask or think, for the sake 'of our divine Redeemer Jesus Christ; to whom, 'with the Father, and the eternal Spirit, be all 'glory, dominion, and power, for ever and ever. '*Amen.*'

A MORNING PRAYER for a FAMILY.

'O Lord our God, the God of the spirits 'of all flesh, all are thine; the souls of parents 'and the souls of children are thine; and thou 'hast mercy, grace, and goodness, sufficient for 'all. We bow before thee this morning, in a

'family

' family capacity, to acknowledge our family ſins,
' and to praiſe thee for family mercies, and to
' make ſupplication unto thee, for family bleſſings.
' O Lord, thou haſt built up our family by thy
' good providence. Thou haſt given us chil-
' dren ; O that they may be made bleſſings to
' us ; that we may never have reaſon to wiſh
' that we had been written childleſs.

' O Lord, we, and our children, are ſinners
' before thee. We lament the original pollution
' of our nature. We are all guilty, parents
' and children, before thee. And wherewith, O
' thou Moſt High, ſhall we come into thy ſight ?
' Should we bring thouſands of rams, or ten
' thouſands of rivers of oil ; ſhould we offer the
' fruit of our body for the ſin of our ſouls ; all
' would be to no purpoſe ; all would be in vain.
' But glory, glory to thy name, O thou moſt
' merciful God, that thou haſt provided a Lamb
' for a ſacrifice, even thine only begotten Son,
' who hath made atonement for ſin. We thank
' thee, that we have heard of the name of Je-
' ſus ; that there is a way of ſalvation opened
' through him ; that we are favoured with the
' light of the goſpel, with thy word and ordi-
' nances, with the means of ſalvation, and the
' hope of eternal life. We bleſs thee, that we,
' and our children, have been baptized into thy
' name ; that we have had liberty to dedicate
' our little Ones to God ; that they have been
' admitted to the ſeals, and are under the bleſ-
' ſings of the covenant : they are born in thy
' houſe, and made members of thy family on
' earth. O thou, who art the God of Abra-
' ham, of Iſaac, and of Jacob, the God and Fa-
' ther of the faithful, we humbly beſeech thee,

' to

' to form us, and our children, for thy holy
' pleasure. Sanctify our souls; sanctify our
' children. May this be a family in which thou
' wilt delight to dwell: and may we all be made
' the servants of the living God.

' O Lord, grant unto our children a good
' capacity; open their minds to receive instruc-
' tion; may they be fitted for usefulness in the
' world, made pious towards God, and meet for
' everlasting happiness. Enable us to teach
' them, and to set holy examples before them;
' to train them up in the way wherein they
' should go; to bring them up in thy fear, in the
' nurture and admonition of the Lord. Most
' gracious God, pardon all our offences; may
' our sins be forgiven, and our iniquities remem-
' bered no more. May each of us be united to
' Christ Jesus in faith, clothed with the robes
' of his righteousness, and justified freely by his
' grace.

' We thank thee, O Lord, for the mercies
' of the last night; that we have slept, have
' been refreshed with rest, are in health this
' morning, and have this opportunity of paying
' our grateful acknowledgments to thee. Now,
' O bountiful preserver of men, take care of us
' this day; keep us in thy fear; preserve us from
' every hurtful danger; may we walk with thee,
' and be enabled to set the Lord always before us.
' Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do,
' may we do all to the glory of thy name. May
' we glorify thee in our souls, and in our bodies,
' which are thine.

' Most merciful father, extend thy mercy to
' a guilty world; pour out thy Spirit upon all
' flesh; revive thine own work in the midst of

' thes;

' these years. Bless our friends and relatives.
' Forgive our enemies, and reward our benefac-
' tors. Look, in mercy, upon us worshipping
' before thee this morning. May we follow our
' daily business, under a sense of thine all-seeing
' eye. Help us to live in an habitual readiness
' for our last day. O that we may live, as we
' shall wish we had lived, when we come to die.
' Be our friend in life; our hope in death; and
' our everlasting portion. All we ask is in the
' name, and for the sake of our Saviour Jesus
' Christ, who is the Lord our Righteousness; to
' him, with the eternal Father, and the ever
' blessed Spirit of grace, be given all wisdom,
' thanksgiving, and dominion, and might, world
' without end. *Amen.*'

An EVENING PRAYER for a FAMILY.

' O thou eternal God, in the morning we
' seek thee, and in the evening we would cele-
' brate thy praises. We, and our children by
' thy good hand upon us, have lived another day.
' We are in health, and have enjoyed many
' comforts. We praise and magnify thy name.
' Thou art calling us from our labour, and giving
' us an opportunity to rest a while, and refresh
' these weary bodies. Thou hast dealt bounti-
' fully with us this day. Blessed be the Lord,
' who loadeth us with his benefits. We have
' received from thee our daily bread, and now
' we lie down, and sleep; for thou, O Lord,
' makest us to dwell in safety.

' Visit us, O God of our salvation, in the
' night, and enable us to commune with our
' hearts upon our beds. Let the Angels of God

' encamp

' encamp around us for our protection. Let our
' Heavenly Father give us counsel ; and let our
' reins instruct us in the night season. May we
' remember thee, O God, and meditate upon
' thee, in the night watches. We praise thee,
' O Lord, for thy mercies and thy blessings to
' us. We humbly beseech thee to look upon
' thine anointed Son, and, in him, be our recon-
' ciled Father and friend. Forgive us all our
' sins ; put us among thy children ; speak peace
' to our souls, and may we ever glorify thee.
' Sanctify us more and more. Enable us to die
' daily to sin, and to live unto righteousness.

' Pardon, O Lord, the sins of which we may
' have been guilty the day past. May our hearts
' be less attached to the world ; and may we
' serve thee better than we have heretofore done.
' Thou art our life. Hitherto our bread hath
' been given us, and our water hath been sure.
' Thou givest us all things richly to enjoy.
' Merciful Father, accept of our humble thanks,
' for all these thine undeserved mercies. Take
' care of us this night : may we lie down in thy
' fear, and sleep in thy favour ; and in the morn-
' ing, when we awake, may our hearts be still
' with God.

' Have mercy upon all we should remember,
' when we bow before thee. Supply the wants
' of the poor and needy ; restore a sound judg-
' ment to those whose understanding is taken
' away. Be a husband to the widow, and a
' Father to the fatherless. Heal the sick ; spare
' useful lives ; comfort those who mourn ; and
' prepare the dying for death. Let true and
' undefiled religion prevail, more and more, in
' the world. Water thy church with the dew

' of

' of thy heavenly grace. Bleſs all the miniſters
' of thy goſpel; dwell in our land; order the
' ſeaſons in mercy. May our rulers be a ter-
' ror to evil doers, and a praiſe to them that
' do well.

' And now, O Lord, we commit ourſelves unto
' thee; we hope in thy mercy, and we truſt in
' thy name. Prepare us for all the diſpenſations
' of thy providence towards us. Preſerve us
' from all the dangers and ſnares to which we
' may be expoſed. Let neither the fear of man,
' which worketh a ſnare, nor cruel mockings,
' nor even the fears of ſuffering death, tempt us
' to make ſhipwreck of faith and a good conſci-
' ence, or to be aſhamed of the goſpel of Chriſt.
' Enable us to fight the good fight of faith, and
' to finiſh our courſe; that we may receive the
' crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the
' righteous Judge, ſhall give unto all them that
' love his appearing. And now, to the Father,
' the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, three Perſons,
' but one God, be aſcribed all glory, honour,
' and praiſe, forever and ever. *Amen.*'

A MORNING PRAYER for a FAMILY.

' O Lord, thou art the God of the ſpirits of
' all fleſh, the Creator and Preſerver of all
' things. We, thine unworthy Creatures, bow
' in thy preſence, to offer up unto thee, in whom
' we live, move and have our being, our morn-
' ing ſacrifice of prayer and praiſe. We count
' it our higheſt honour, that we are permitted to
' worſhip thee. It is our ineſtimable privilege
' to know the only true God; and to have
' boldneſs to enter into the holieſt by the blood
' of Jeſus.

' We

' We acknowledge, before thee, we have for-
' feited all title to thy favour ; we have render-
' ed ourſelves unworthy of thy regard. Thou
' madeſt man at firſt upright, but he ſought out
' many inventions. In one man all have ſinned ;
' and in the ſame Adam all die. To us belong-
' eth ſhame and confuſion of face. O Lord
' moſt holy, we are not only by nature unclean,
' but we have broken thy commandments, and
' have dared to reſiſt the ordinances of him who
' is higher than the higheſt. When the awful
' denunciations of thy wrath were ſounding in
' our ears, we have hardened our hearts againſt
' fear. We have remained unmoved, amidſt
' the fulleſt declarations of thy mercy, and the
' warmeſt invitations of thy love. Juſtly might-
' eſt thou have given us up, to purſue our own
' devices, without reſtraint or poſſibility of being
' recovered. But, glory to thy great name, the
' thoughts of Jehovah are not as our thoughts ;
' the ways of the Lord are not like the ways of
' man. When we were caſt out, as to the loath-
' ing of our own ſoul, without eye to pity, and
' without hand to help, thine own eye pitied,
' thine own arm brought us ſalvation.

' We thank thee, moſt gracious God, that we
' are not left to ſay, Will the Lord be pleaſed
' with thouſands of rams, or with ten thouſands
' of rivers of oil ? ſhall we give our firſt-born for
' our tranſgreſſion, the fruit of our body for the
' ſin of our ſoul ? Thou, O Lord, haſt ſhewed
' us what is Good. Thou haſt ſet forth thine
' own Son, to be the Propitiation, through faith
' in his blood. Glory to God in the higheſt,
' that peace is now proclaimed on earth, and
' good-will is publiſhed to the ſons of men. Now

' there

' there is no condemnation to them who are in
' Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the fleſh but
' after the Spirit. He is able to ſave them to
' the uttermoſt that come unto God by him,
' ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for
' them.

' O Lord, let none of us reject the counſel of
' God againſt our own ſouls. Leave us not in
' unbelief. Give us not up to hardneſs of heart.
' We pray for the gift of thy Holy Spirit. O
' may we be adorned with his fruits. Grant us
' ſo to feel his quickening grace, and his ſtrength-
' ening influence, that we may be enabled to
' perfect holineſs in the fear of the Lord; to
' work out our own ſalvation, with fear and trem-
' bling: for it is God who worketh in us both
' to will and to do of his good pleaſure.

' Almighty God, keep us from every tempta-
' tion. O let not the allurements of the world,
' the deceitfulneſs of riches, the cares of this
' life, or the enſnaring pleaſures of ſin, draw off
' our hearts from thee. May we feel the pow-
' ers of the world to come. May we ſet thee,
' the Lord, always before us; and walk by
' faith, not by ſight.

' We beſeech thee, O Lord, to bleſs all our
' friends and relatives, wherever they may be.
' Make them partakers of thy grace, and heirs
' of thy glory. Bleſs our enemies. Enable us
' to forgive them, and to overcome evil with
' good.

' Accept, O Lord, of our hearty thanks for
' thy preſerving care of us through the ſilent
' watches of the night. We have ſlept, and are
' refreſhed. Thou haſt raiſed us up in health,
' and haſt girded us with ſtrength for labour.

'Enable us, O our God, to perform the duties of 'the day aright. Let us not be ſlothful or negligent 'in buſineſs. Whatever our hands find to do, 'may we do it with our might, as unto the Lord. 'May we ever remember, that we are only pil- 'grims and ſtrangers; and that every return, of 'night and of day, is bringing us nearer our 'eternal home.

'Forgive, we beſeech thee, all our ſins. En- 'able us to cleanſe ourſelves from all filthineſs, 'both of the fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs 'in the fear of God. Hear us, O Lord, in Hea- 'ven, the habitation of thy holineſs, and graci- 'ouſly anſwer our prayers; for the ſake of Jeſus 'Chriſt, our glorious Redeemer and Advocate. '*Amen.*'

An EVENING PRAYER for a FAMILY.

'Our Father who art in Heaven, thou art the 'hearer of prayer. The gods of the nations 'were idols, ſilver and gold, the work of men's 'hands; they ſaw not; they heard not; nor 'could they relieve their deluded worſhippers. 'But thou, O our God, art he who ſtretched 'out the heavens, and who laid the foundations 'of the earth, and formed the ſpirit of man with- 'in him. Thou upholdeſt all things by the 'word of thy power. Thine eyes run to and 'fro, throughout the whole earth, beholding the 'evil and the good; and thine ears are ever 'open to the cries of thy people. We humbly 'preſent unto thee our evening devotion.

'Thou, O Lord, haſt preſerved us this day; 'thou haſt fed us; thou haſt clothed us; thou 'haſt enabled us to labour; and thou haſt bleſ-

'ſed

' ſed the work of our hands. It is becauſe of
' our rebellion againſt God, that we muſt eat
' our bread in the ſweat of our brow. But we
' give thee moſt hearty thanks, that, amidſt all
' the toils and burdens of the day, we can refreſh
' our ſouls, by meditating on that reſt which
' thou haſt prepared for all thy people.

' Enable us all, O Lord, to diſcharge every
' duty of our ſtation, in ſuch a manner, that each
' of us may receive that moſt enlivening com-
' mendation, Well done, good and faithful ſer-
' vant; thou haſt been faithful over a few
' things, I will make thee ruler over many
' things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.
' It will avail us nothing to attain to riches or to
' honour here, if we are ſtill the enemies of God.
' O give us grace to ſeek firſt the kingdom of
' God, and his righteouſneſs, and all needful
' things ſhall be added unto us.

' O God of grace, let thy bleſſing reſt upon
' us at all times. May this houſe be a houſe for
' God. May we be bleſſed in him in whom all the
' families of the earth are bleſſed. Bleſs us in our
' baſket and in our ſtore. Bleſs us in our out-
' going, and in our incoming: but, above all,
' may our ſouls be in health and proſper.

' May the good Lord pardon whatever we
' have done amiſs this day. Blot out the ſins of
' our whole lives. We confeſs, that in all things
' we offend, and come far ſhort of thy glory.
' O Lord, we are unprofitable ſervants. Know-
' ing that a man is not juſtified by the works of
' the law, but by the faith of Jeſus Chriſt, we
' deſire to believe in Jeſus Chriſt; that we may
' be juſtified by the faith of Chriſt, and not by
' the works of the law. O grant us grace to

' adorn

'adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all 'things. Fill us with thy Spirit. Enable us, 'through the Spirit, to mortify the deeds of the 'body, that we may live. Let the same mind 'be in us, which was also in Christ Jesus; that, 'learning of him, who was meek and lowly, we 'may find rest unto our souls. Hide pride from 'our eyes. Clothe us with humility.

'We pray, O Lord, that thou wouldest 'keep us from all danger. Preserve us from 'fear in the night. Let our rest be sweet; and 'in the morning, when we awake, may we be 'still with thee. We pray for all who are in 'sickness and distress. Provide for the poor and 'needy. Make them sensible of their spiritual 'wants; and may they be directed to him in 'whom all fulness dwells. Bless thy church 'throughout the world. Encourage, assist, and 'prosper all the ministers of the everlasting gos-'pel. Bless our rulers, and enable them to 'rule in thy fear. Grant us whatever thou 'seest to be good for us: and let our prayers 'come up before thy throne, and send us an 'answer of peace; for the sake of Jesus Christ, 'thy well beloved Son. *Amen.*'

A PRAYER for a FAMILY in AFFLICTION.

'Almighty and eternal God, the heaven is 'thy throne, and the earth is thy footstool. 'Thousands of angels surround thy throne; ten 'thousand times ten thousand of these blessed 'spirits minister unto thee. The heavens are 'not clean in thy sight. Behold, God put no 'trust in his servants; and his angels he charged 'with folly. The most exalted of the celestial

'hosts

' hoſts veil their faces in thy preſence, and reſt
' not, day and night, ſaying, Holy, holy, holy
' Lord God Almighty! Juſt and true art thou
' in all thy ways, and holy in all thy works.
' Day unto day uttereth ſpeech, and night unto
' night ſheweth knowledge of thee.

' O Lord, although thou haſt not left thyſelf
' without a witneſs, in that thou doſt good, and
' giveſt us rain from heaven, and fruitful ſeaſons,
' filling our hearts with food and gladneſs; yet
' we have forgotten thee. O Lord, we have
' often miſimproved the bounties of thy provi-
' dence, and have abuſed thy goodneſs, and have
' not remembered or acknowledged thee, the
' bountiful giver of all good things. What ſhall
' we ſay unto thee, O moſt righteous God? for
' we have forſaken thy commandments. Juſtly
' mayeſt thou ſay unto us, In the day of your
' proſperity, your hearts waxed fat, and ye
' kicked againſt the heavens; now in your diſ-
' treſs ye come unto me.

' Lord, we confeſs, with ſhame and confuſion
' of face, our thoughtleſſneſs, our ſin, our ſtupi-
' dity, and our folly. Thou mighteſt juſtly hide
' thy face from us, and turn our prayer into ſin.
' But, be not wroth very ſore, O Lord, neither
' remember iniquity forever: Behold, ſee, we
' beſeech thee, we are all thy people. Our
' fathers truſted in thee, and were not put to
' ſhame. Thou art ſtill the ſame merciful God;
' forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin. Thine
' ear is not heavy, that thou canſt not hear;
' thine arm is not ſhortened, that thou canſt not
' ſave. O Lord, hide thy face from our ſins;
' and hear us for thine own name's ſake. Should-
' eſt thou lay judgment to the line, and righte-

' ouſneſs

' ouſneſs to the plummet, none could ſtand before
' thee. But thou haſt given thine own Son, to
' be a ſacrifice for ſin; and art in Chriſt recon-
' ciling the world unto thyſelf, not imputing their
' treſpaſſes unto them. Encouraged by the grace
' and promiſes of the goſpel, we have felt in our
' hearts to pray unto thee this prayer.

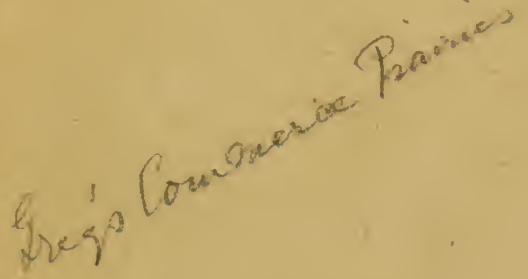
' O Lord, we do not, aſk thoſe things which
' the world calls good. Our heart's deſire, our
' moſt fervent prayer unto thee is, that we may be
' found in Chriſt Jeſus, not having our own right-
' eouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is
' through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs
' which is of God by faith. O may we paſs from
' death unto life; and have reaſon to ſay, it is good
' for us that we have been afflicted; for before
' we were afflicted we went aſtray; but now
' have we learnt to keep thy holy law.

' O Lord, we beſeech thee, of thine infinite
' mercy, to bleſs, unto each of us, this afflictive
' diſpenſation of thy providence. In this day of
' adverſity may we conſider. Let us not deſpiſe
' the chaſtening of the Lord; nor faint when
' we are rebuked of him. Enable us to poſſeſs
' our ſouls in patience, and to ſay, whatever thou
' art pleaſed to order in our lot, the will of the
' Lord be done.

' But, O Lord, contend not with us forever.
' Remember that we are but duſt. Deliver us,
' we humbly intreat thee, in thy good time, and
' in thine own way, that we may yet praiſe thee
' in the land of the living. Grant, O grant unto
' us, the pardon of all our ſins. May we be
' waſhed in the fountain opened for ſin and for
' uncleanneſs. May we receive, from the Prince
' and Saviour exalted, true and unfeigned re-

' pentance

' pentance. Beautify our ſouls with thy ſalva-
' tion ; and let the conſolations of thy Spirit
' abound in us. O teach us ſo to number our
' days, as to apply our hearts unto wiſdom.
' May we daily die unto ſin, and live unto righ-
' teouſneſs.

' O Lord God of Hoſts, let none of us ſo
' far deceive our own ſouls, as to put off prepa-
' ration for eternity to a dying hour. In this
' our day, enable us to attend to the things
' which belong to our peace, before they are
' forever hid from our eyes. For us to live,
' may it be Chriſt ; for us to die, may it be gain ;
' that ſo, when our fleſh and our heart faileth,
' God may be the ſtrength of our heart, and
' our portion forever. Now, O Lord, what
' wait we for ? Our hope is in thy word : all
' our deſires are before thee. O Lord, hear ;
' O Lord, forgive ; O Lord, hearken and do :
' defer not, for thine own ſake, O our God. We
' offer all our ſupplications unto thee, in the
' name of Jeſus Chriſt, the High Prieſt of our
' profeſſion, who is God over all bleſſed forever.

A M E N.